

THE WESLEY YEARBOOK

*Or, Practical Quotations from the
Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*



Selected and Compiled by
MARY YANDELL KELLY

NASHVILLE, TENN.; DALLAS, TEX.
PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH
BARBEE & SMITH, AGENTS
1900

COPYRIGHTED, 1899
BY
MARY YANDELL KELLY

To My Father

Introduction

GR E A T in intellect, great in scholarship, and great in the purposes and outcome of his life, John Wesley grows ever greater in the judgment and appreciation of Christendom. His wise and weighty words, inspired by the living exigencies of the times in which he wrought, acquire a new and deepening significance as the world advances in the study and solution of the problems of the spiritual life. Men live in their words ; and this man's words, carefully chosen and deliberately uttered, expound the manner and measure of his personality. It was a happy thought, the distinction and advantage of which, it were easy to envy, which led the gifted young compiler of these pages to so arrange an extensive line of Mr. Wesley's sayings as to give us a ready, vivid, and correct intellectual and spiritual portrait of the great leader and reformer. This is a book the use of which must happily influence character-making,

and it is most admirably adapted to the needs of young people, and indeed to people of all ages, as a text for daily reading and a help to reflection. These quotations, though selected at large from Mr. Wesley's writings, bring into view no disputed points in theology or experience; but they reveal a great soul in the pose of tolerance, charity, and Christlikeness, "desiring a league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Jesus Christ." It is our confidence that this book holds not only a pledge of acceptability to multitudes of young and old to-day, but that it also possesses a pertinency for the years to come.

HORACE M. DU BOSE,
General Secretary Epworth League.

NASHVILLE, TENN., April 20, 1900.



The Wesley Yearbook

January 1

“WHITHER shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I go from thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down to hell, thou art there also.” If I could ascend, speaking after the manner of men, to the highest part of the universe, or could I descend to the lowest point, thou art alike present both in one and the other.

“If I should take the wings of the morning and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand would lead me;” thy power and thy presence would be before me; “and thy right hand would hold me”—in a word, there is no point in space, whether within or without the space of creation, where God is not.

If this is to be the last year of my life, I hope it will be the best.

2

If you would please men, please God.

Think and speak and do what you are persuaded Christ himself would do in your case were he on earth.

3

Let every action have reference to your whole life, and not a part only.

Let thy whole life be a preparation for heaven, like the preparation of wrestlers for the combat.

Consult duty, not events. We have nothing to do but to mind our duty.

4

In using riches where they have no real use, nor we any real want, we only use them to our great hurt: in creating unreasonable desires, in nourishing ill tempers, in indulging foolish passions, and in supporting a vain turn of mind.

5

Though in one sense conscience may seem natural, because it is found in all men, yet properly speaking it is not natural, but a supernatural gift of God above all his natural endowments.

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good. And it is *His* spirit who giveth thee an inward check, who causeth thee to feel uneasy when thou walkest in any instance contrary to the light which he hath given thee.

6

I advise men of sincerity and simplicity never to take that silly word “compliment” into their mouths, but labor to keep at utmost distance both from the name and the thing.

As soon as the mask drops off, as soon as it appears that the speaker meant nothing by his soft words, we are pleased no longer. Every man's own experience teaches him this, and we all know that if a man continues to flatter after his insincerity is discovered it is disgusting, not agreeable. Therefore even this *fashionable* way of lying is to be avoided.

7

“Love is long-suffering.” It endures not a few affronts, reproaches, injuries ; but all things which God has pleased to permit either men or devils to inflict.

It arms the soul with its inviolable patience ; not harsh stocial patience, but yielding as the air, which, making no resistance to the stroke, receives no harm thereby.

8

It has been a maxim with many that “women are only to be seen, not heard.” And accordingly many of them are brought up in such a manner as if they were only designed for agreeable playthings.

But is this doing honor to the sex? No ; it is the deepest unkindness, and I do not know how any woman of sense and spirit can submit to it.

I cannot believe the noblest creature in the visible world to be only a fine piece of clock-work.

9

An education under Pythagoras or Socrates had no other end but to teach children to think and act like Pythagoras or Socrates did. And is it not reasonable to suppose that a Christian education should have no other end but to teach them how to think and judge and act according to the strictest rules of Christianity.

10

Do you understand what is your duty to your father and mother? Do you consider that by divine appointment their will is to be a law to you? See your father and mother as representing your Father which is in heaven.

11

Every one under your roof that has a soul to be saved is under your care. And it is not the will of your Master, who is in heaven, that any of these should go out of your hands before they have received from you something more valuable than gold or silver.

Still your record is with the Lord, and your reward with the most high.

12

In Paris ladies of the first quality—yea, princesses of the blood, of the royal family—constantly visit the sick, particularly the patients in the Grand Hospital. Here is a fashion that does honor to human nature. It began in France, but God forbid that it should end there!

One great reason why the rich in general have so little sympathy for the poor is because they so seldom visit them. Hence it is that one part of the world does not know what the other suffers. Many of them do not, because they do not care to know.

13

It is a dreadful thing to be condemned by the Word of God and not condemned by your own heart. If we can break the least of the known commandments of God without self-condemnation, it is plain that the god of this world has hardened our hearts. If we do not soon recover from this, we shall be “past feeling,” and our conscience will be “seared as with a hot iron.”

14

Beware of the impetuosity of your temper! It may easily lead you awry. It may make you evil affected to the excellent ones of the earth. The longer I live the larger allowances I make for human infirmities. I exact more from myself, and less from others. Go thou and do likewise.

What advice you would give another, take yourself.

15

I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with. This must be the spirit with all who take journeys with me. If a dinner ill dressed, a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dirty road will put them out of humor, it lays a burden upon me greater than all the rest put together.

By the grace of God I never fret; I repine at nothing; I am discontented with nothing. And to have persons at my ear fretting and murmuring at everything is like tearing the flesh off my bones.

16

I seek two things in this world : Truth and love. Whoever assists me in this search is a friend indeed.

Of all the disputants I have known, you are the most likely to convince me of any mistakes I may be in ; because you have found out the great secret of speaking the truth in love.

17

Put out whatever thou canst spare upon better security than this world can afford. Lay up thy treasure in the bank of heaven, and God shall restore it in that day. “ He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to the Lord ; and look, what he layeth out it shall be paid him again.”

18

Optimus Dei cultus, imitari quem colis : “ It is the best worship or service of God to imitate him you worship.”

“ God is a spirit,” and they that imitate or resemble him must do it in “ spirit and in truth.”

19

It is the will of God that every man should labor to eat his own bread. A Christian abhors sloth as much as drunkenness, and flees from idleness as he does from adultery.

I hope I shall not live to be useless.

Spending more time in bed than your constitution requires hurts your substance, hurts your health, weakens your sight, hurts your soul. Sleep is such a dull, stupid state of existence that even among animals we despise them most which are most drowsy.

I am glad you use more exercise. It is good for both body and soul.

20

Men are generally inclined to think well of one that talks well; but men of reflection are not satisfied, they are not content with a flood of words, they prefer thinking before talking, and judge that one that knows much is far preferable to one that talks much.

I hope my life, rather than my tongue, says: I desire only to spend and be spent in the work.

21

The wickedness of the children is generally owing to the fault or neglect of their parents. For it is a general though not universal rule, though it admits of some exceptions: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

O what a work it is to train up children for heaven!

22

My wife used to tell me: "My dear, you are too generous. You don't know the value of money." Possibly you may sometimes lean to the same extreme. I know you are a generous spirit. You have an open heart and an open hand. But may it not sometimes be too open, more so than your circumstances will allow? Is it not an instance of Christian as well as worldly prudence to cut our coat according to our cloth? If your circumstances are a little narrow, should you not contract your expenses too? I need but just give you this hint, which I doubt not you will take kindly.

23

So many of you are a generation of triflers—triflers with God, with one another, and with your own souls. How few of you spend from one week to another a single hour in private prayer! How few have any thought of God in the general tenor of your conversation! In the name of the Lord God Almighty, I ask what religion are you of?

And here you have a large field before you. You have scope for exercising all the talents which God has given you.

24

Perhaps you are now in heaviness of soul; God, as it were, hides his face from you. In such a temper of mind, how natural is it to say: “O how I will praise God when the light of his countenance shall be again lifted upon my soul!”

Do not believe in thyself. Thou wilt not do it then, unless thou doest it now.

Who can hurt us if God be on our side? Trials may come, but they are all good.

25

Be serious and frequent in the examination of your heart and life. Every evening review your carriage through the day: what you have done or thought that was unbecoming your character. Have a special care of two portions of time—namely, morning and evening; the morning to forethink what you have to do, and the evening to examine whether you have done what you ought.

26

First, if we can consider the Lord's Supper as a command of Christ, no man can have any pretense to Christian piety who does not receive it as often as he can.

Secondly, if we consider the institution of it a mercy to ourselves, no man who does not receive it as often as he can has any pretense to Christian prudence.

Thirdly, that none of the objections usually made can be any excuse for that man who does not, at every opportunity, obey this command and accept this mercy.

27

Possibly "the bread" which you have "cast upon the waters" may be "found after many days." The seed which has long remained in the ground may at length spring into a plentiful harvest, especially if you do not restrain prayer before God.

28

Never make light of going to church, either by word or deed.

It is not honest to profess yourself of a society and not observe the rules of it.

Surely, of all people, the Methodists would be the most inexcusable should they let any opportunity slip of attending that worship which has so many advantages, should they prefer any before it, or not continually improve by the advantages they enjoy.

What can be pleaded for them if they do not worship God in spirit and in truth, if they are still outward worshipers only, approaching God with their lips while their hearts are far from him?

29

The truth and love which continually reign in the heart produce an open front and a serene countenance, such as leave no pretense to say, with that arrogant king of Castile, “When God made man he left one capital defect: he ought to have set a window in his breast,” for he opens a window in his own breast by the whole of his words and actions.

30

Good breeding is chiefly the fruit of education, but education cannot give courtesy of heart. I have seen as real courtesy in an Irish cabin as could be found in St. James or the Louvre.

The mode of showing your courtesy may vary, as Christian prudence will direct; but the thing itself is due to all—the lowest and the worst have a claim to your courtesy.

31

Spend all the morning, or at least five hours in twenty-four, in reading the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly.

“But I have no taste for reading.” Contract a taste for it by use.

Do it as you can till you can do it as you would.

February 1

But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid you differ from me. I study to be little ; you study to be great. I creep ; you strut along. O beware, do not seek to be something ! Let me be nothing, and “Christ be all in all.”

Nothing humbles the soul so deeply as love ; it makes us willing to be the least of all and the servant of all.

2

God provides for you to-day what is needful to sustain the life which he has given you. It is enough. Give yourself up into his hands. If you live another day, he will provide for that also.

3

“In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not whether shall prosper.” “Say not, “I can do nothing ; I am slow of speech.” True, but who made the tongue ?

A word spoken in season, how good it is !

4

Dare any of you, in choosing your calling or situation, eye the things on earth rather than the things above? In choosing a profession or a companion of life for your child, do you look at earth or heaven?

And can you deliberately prefer, either for yourself or your offspring, a child of the devil with money, to a child of God without it? Repent of your vile earthly-mindedness.

Let your eye be single, that your whole body may be full of life.

5

Remember one good temper is of more value in the sight of God than a thousand good verses.

A drunken dragoon was commencing an assertion in military fashion, "G—d eternally d—n me," just as I was passing.

I touched the poor man on the shoulder, and when he turned around fiercely, said calmly: "You mean, God bless you."

6

I do nothing rashly.

Fervor for opinion is not Christian zeal. How innumerable are the mischiefs which this species of false zeal has occasioned in the Christian world!

7

Slovenness is no part of religion.

A preacher's wife should be a pattern. Let nothing slatternly be seen about her, in her clothes or habitation. And she should be a pattern of industry; always at work, either for herself or her husband or the poor.

Be exemplary in all things.

8

My brother Charles, amid the difficulties of our early ministry, used to say: "If the Lord would give me wings, I would fly." I used to answer: "If the Lord bid me fly, I should trust for the wings."

9

By a various train of providences you have been led to the very place where God intended you should be.

In a short time how little will it signify whether we have lived in the summer islands or beneath "the range of Arctos and eternal frost!" How soon will this dream of life be at an end! And when we are once landed in eternity it will all be one whether we spent our time on earth in a palace or had not where to lay our heads.

10

The greatest blow that genuine Christianity ever received was when Constantine the Great called himself a Christian and poured in a flood of riches, honors, and power upon the Christians, more especially upon the clergy.

It is a sad observation, they that have most money have least grace.

11

Conscience is placed in the middle, under God and above man. It is a kind of silent reasoning of the mind whereby those things which are judged to be right are approved of with pleasure, but those which are judged evil are disapproved of with uneasiness.

This is a tribunal in the breast of men: to accuse sinners and to excuse them that do well.

To follow my own conscience, without any regard to consequences or prudence, so called, is a rule which I have closely followed for many years, and I hope to follow to my life's end.

12

Take all the opportunities of declaring to others the affection which you really feel for them. This may be done with such an air and in such a manner as is not liable to the imputation of flattery.

Honest men are pleased by this. You may judge them by yourself.

You like to be honored, but had you not rather be loved?

13

Be it thy earnest care to improve the present hour. This is your own, and it is your all. The past is as nothing, as though it had never been. The future is not yours, perhaps it never will be.

Therefore live to-day ; lose not an hour.

14

In seeking the peace and love of God you shall find, in your way to the kingdom, all outward things, so far as they are expedient.

This care God has taken upon himself ; cast all your care upon him. He knoweth your wants, and whatsoever is lacking he will not fail to supply.

15

My brother suspects everybody, and he is continually imposed upon ; but I suspect nobody, and I am never imposed upon.

I am persuaded that love and tender measures will do more than violence.

16

Is it not an amazing weakness that when they have the most beautiful patterns before them all builders will affect to mend something !

17

Do you not find that *any time* is *no time*?
I am afraid of delay.

18

It seems to me that, of all persons I ever knew, you are hardest to be convinced.

I have likewise doubted whether you were not full as hard to be persuaded as to be convinced ; whether your will does not adhere to its first basis, right or wrong, as strongly as your understanding.

Perhaps you readily, too readily, change your own mere notion ; so that it is not easy to please you long, but exceedingly easy to offend you.

I have frequently observed great fickleness and great stubbornness meet in the same mind.

19

If you desire to rise early, sleep early.

In spite of the most dear and agreeable company, in spite of entreaties, railleries, or reproaches, rigorously keep your hour.

Inquiring why none of my family attended the morning preaching, they said they sat up too late. I resolved to put a stop to this; and therefore ordered that every one under my roof should go to bed at nine, and that every one attend the morning preaching; and so they have done ever since.

20

Speak plainly and artlessly to every one, when we speak at all; the speaking as little children, in a childlike though not a childish manner.

God indispensably requires "truth in the inward parts," influencing all our words and actions.

I quite agree with our poet: "It never was good day since lowly fawning was called compliment."

21

Why were we sent into the world? For one sole end and for no other: to prepare for eternity. For this alone we live. For this and no other purpose is our life either given or continued.

Only use the world, but enjoy God.

22

It is no more sinful to be rich than to be poor, but it is dangerous beyond expression.

It is a true remark of Kempis: "The more thou deniest thyself, the more thou wilt grow in grace."

23

The size of a book is not always the measure of the writer's understanding. Nay, I believe, if angels were to write books, we should have very few folios. Neither am I fond of tracts that begin and end before they have cleared up anything.

24

You want to know God in order to enjoy him in time and eternity.

All you want to know of him is contained in one book, the Bible; and all that you learn is to be referred to this, either directly or remotely.

Would it not be well then to spend at least one hour a day in reading and meditating on the Bible? reading morning and evening a portion of the Old and the New Testament with explanatory notes?

25

In what city or town, in what market or exchange, in what street or place of public resort, is not the name of God taken in vain day by day? From the noble to the peasant, who fails to call upon God in this if in no other way?

Whither can you turn, where can you go, without hearing some praying to God for damnation, either on his neighbor or himself; cursing those, without either fear or remorse, whom Christ hath bought to inherit a blessing?

26

What is it that we contend about? Brother, is thy heart with mine as my heart is with thine? If it be, give me thy hand. I am indeed a poor, foolish, sinful worm, and how long my Lord will use me I know not. But so long as I am continued in the work, let us rise up together, let us not weaken but strengthen one another's hands in God.

My brother, my soul is gone forth to meet thee; let us fall upon one another's neck.

The good Lord blot out all that is past, and let there henceforth be peace between me and thee.

27

Let love not visit you as a transient guest, but be the constant temper of your soul. Let it pant in your heart, let it sparkle in your eyes; let it shine in all your actions, and let there be in your tongue the law of kindness.

28

And while you minister to others, how many blessings may redound into your own bosom! Hereby your natural levity may be destroyed, your fondness for trifles cured, your wrong tempers corrected, your evil habits weakened until they are rooted out.

3

March 1

Uneasy care is unlawful care.

With a single eye to God do all that in you lies to provide things honest in the sight of all men, and then give up all into better hands—leave the whole event to God.

2

Passionate men have seldom many friends—at least, not for any length of time. Crowds indeed may attend them for a season, especially when it may promote their interests ; but they are usually disgusted, one after another, and fall off like autumn leaves.

Men of tender dispositions are afraid even to converse with a person of a passionate temper and behavior, and others are not fond of their acquaintance ; as they frequently meet with shocks which, if they bear for the present, they do not willingly put themselves in the way of meeting with again.

3

Do nothing on which you cannot pray for a blessing. Every action of a Christian that is good is sanctified by the Word and prayer.

It becomes not a Christian to do anything so trivial that he cannot pray over it. And if he would bestow a serious ejaculation on every occurrent action, such a prayer would cut off all things sinful and encourage all things lawful.

4

My dear maiden, beware of pride, beware of flattery, suffer none to commend you to your face.

One gentlewoman laughed almost incessantly. She knew there was nothing to laugh at, but she thought she laughed prettily.

I see a danger you are in which you, perhaps, do not see yourself.

All you want is to have the mind that was in Christ, and to walk as Christ walked.

It is undoubtedly true that if you are steadily determined to walk in this path—to endeavor by every possible means that you and your house may serve the Lord, that every member of your family may worship him, not in form but in spirit and in truth—you will have need to use all the grace, all the courage, all the wisdom which God has given you; for you will find such hindrances in the way as only the mighty power of God can enable you to break through. You will have all the saints of the world to grapple with, who will think you carry things too far.

You will have all the powers of darkness against you, employing both force and fraud. Above all, the deceitfulness of your own heart, which if you hearken to it, will supply you with many reasons why you should be a little more conformable to the world.

But as you have begun, go on in the name of the Lord and in the power of his might.

Whatever others do, let you and your house adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

6

To be singular, merely for the sake of singularity, is not the part of a Christian.

I would not advise you to imitate the Quakers in those little particularities of dress which can answer no possible end but to distinguish them from all other people. But I do advise you to imitate them, first, in the neatness, and, secondly, in the plainness of their apparel.

7

I set out early in life with an utter abhorrence of persecution in every form. Reading this morning a tract written by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress. This is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature.

Go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing villainy.

If God be for you, who can be against?

If we do not take care, we shall degenerate into milksops.

You cannot stand still ; you must either rise or fall—rise higher or fall lower. Therefore the voice of God to the children of God is : “ Go forward.”

“ Soldiers of Christ, arise.”

Most of the present stage entertainments sap the foundation of all religion, as they naturally tend to efface all traces of piety and seriousness out of the minds of men.

They are peculiarly hurtful to a trading city, giving a wrong turn to youth especially—gay, trifling, and directly opposite to the spirit of industry and close application to business.

Drinking and debauchery of every kind are constant attendants on these entertainments, with indolence, effeminacy, and idleness, which affect trade in a high degree.

IO

Consider yourself as living under God's eye ; live as in the sensible presence of the jealous God. Remember all things are naked and open before him. You cannot deceive him, for he is infinite in wisdom ; you cannot fly from him, for he is everywhere ; you cannot bribe him, for he is righteousness itself.

Speak as knowing God hears you.

Walk as knowing God besets you on every side.

II

Be active, be diligent ; avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence. Fly from every degree, every appearance of it.

Whatever clothes you wear, let them be whole : no rents, no tatters, no rags. These are a scandal to either man or woman, being another fruit of laziness.

Mend your clothes, or I shall never expect you to mend your lives. Let none ever see a *ragged Methodist*.

12

There can be no little sin till we can find a little God.

Perhaps you will say: "This is only a little thing; it is a mere trifle." I answer: "If it be, you are the more inexcusable before God and man." What! will you disobey a plain commandment of God for a mere trifle?

13

Pray always.

Take care that you be not at all discouraged, though you should not always have an immediate answer.

You know "His manner and His times are best."

14

You must not promise more than you can perform.

Who ever indorses a bill—that is, promises to pay—for more than he is worth, is either a fool or a knave.

Let us have no law, if it be possible to avoid it. That is the last and worst enemy. Try every other remedy first.

15

Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God.

Speak, and spare not.

We, of all men, should be punctual in all we say, that none of our words may fall to the ground.

16

“What is Christian perfection?”

The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper remains in the soul, and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

17

I doubt you are a great deal more in danger from honor than dishonor.

So it is with me. I always find there is most hazard in sailing upon smooth water. When the winds blow and the seas rage even the sleepers will rise and call upon God.

Logic is the art of apprehending things clearly, judging truly, and reasoning conclusively.

What is it viewed in another light but the art of learning and teaching, whether by convincing or persuading? What is there, then, in the whole compass of science to be desired in comparison of it?

It is good for this at least: to make people talk less by showing them both what is, and what is not, to the point. And how extremely hard it is to *prove anything*.

I have abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they call demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces, in spite of all covers to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment.

I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ.

20

I would not advise you to preach the law without the gospel any more than the gospel without the law. Undoubtedly both should be preached in their turn.

The “gospel preachers,” so called, corrupt their hearers, and vitiate their tastes. They feed them with sweetmeats till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial, which makes them all life and spirit for the present; but meantime their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the Word.

“God loves you, therefore love and obey him. Christ died for you, therefore die to sin. Christ is risen, therefore rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore, therefore live to God”—so we preached, and so you believed. This is the scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left!

21

Bear your cross, and it will bear you.

22

I have no acquaintances but such as fear God. I know it may be some time before you will find any that truly bear this character. If so, it is best to be alone till you do.

If you are carried with the stream into frequent conversations with harmless, good-natured, honest triflers, they will soon steal away all your strength and stifle all the grace of God in your soul.

23

With regard to myself, you do well to warn me against popularity, a thirst of power and of applause; against envy producing a seeming contempt for the convenience or grandeur of this life; against an affected humility; against sparing from myself to give to others, from no other motive than ostentation. I am not conscious to myself that this is my case. However, the warning is always friendly, and it is always seasonable, considering how deceitful my heart is and how many the enemies that surround me.

24

Let us have ever so much faith, and be our faith ever so strong, it will never save us from hell unless it now saves us from unholy tempers ; from pride, passion, impatience ; from all arrogance of spirit, all haughtiness and overbearing ; from wrath, anger, bitterness, discontent, murmuring, and peevishness.

25

“Tommy,” said Wesley, “touch that!” pointing to a dock.

The itinerant did so.

“Do you feel anything?” asked Wesley.

“No,” replied his friend.

“Touch that,” continued Wesley, pointing to a nettle.

His companion obeyed, and was stung.

“Now, Tommy,” remarked Wesley, “some men are like docks : say what you will to them, they are stupid and insensible. Others are like nettles : touch them, and they resent it. Tommy, you are a nettle ; and, for my part, I would rather have to do with a nettle than a dock.”

26

I received a bank bill: the whole sum of this was laid out in real charity. How much more noble a satisfaction must result from this to the generous benefactor than he could receive from an embroidered suit of clothes or a piece of plate made in the newest fashion!

27

I heard "Judith," an oratorio, at the Lock. Some parts of it were exceeding fine; but there are two things in all modern music which I could never reconcile to common sense: One is singing the same words ten times over; the other, singing different words by different persons at one and the same time, and this in the most solemn addresses to God, whether by way of prayer or thanksgiving. This can never be defended by all the musicians in Europe till reason is out of date.

The sense was admirable throughout, and much of the poetry not contemptible. This, joined with exquisite music, might possibly make an impression even upon rich and honorable sinners.

28

If it please God that troublous times come between the design and the execution, I shall go as far as I can and no farther. But I take no thought for the morrow.

To-day I am determined, by His grace, to do the work of Him that sent me.

29

Consider! You were not created to please your senses, to gratify your imagination, to gain money or praise of men; to seek happiness in any created good, in anything under the sun. All this is “walking in vain shadow.” It is leading a restless, miserable life in order to a miserable eternity.

On the contrary, you were created for this, and for no other purpose: by seeking and finding happiness in God on earth to secure the glory of God in heaven. Therefore let your heart say: “This one thing I do.”

30

Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm.

Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him ; they may be from nature ; they may be from the devil.

Try all things by the written Word, and let all bow down before it.

31

It is my religion which obliges me to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers.

Loyalty is with me an essential branch of religion, and which I am sorry any Methodist should forget.

There is the closest connection, therefore, between my religious and political conduct ; the selfsame authority enjoining me to fear God and to honor the king.

April 1

O let this be deep engraven upon your heart :
“All is nothing without love !”

Love is the queen of all graces ; the highest perfection in earth or in heaven, the very image of the invisible God, as in men below, so in angels above. “For God is love,” and “he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.”

2

We must, we must, you and I, at least be all devoted to God ; then wives, and sons, and daughters, and everything else will be real, invaluable blessings.

If you and your wife strengthen each other’s hands in God, then you will surely receive a blessing from him.

But it is not abundance of money or any creature that can make us happy without him.

3

What shall we say concerning the youth of this place? Have you either the form or the power of Christian godliness? Are you humble, teachable, advisable, or stubborn, self-willed, heady, and high-minded!

Are you obedient to your superiors as to parents? Or do you despise those to whom you owe the tenderest reverence? Are you diligent in pursuing your studies with all your strength, crowding as much work into every day as it may contain?

Rather do you not waste day after day either in reading what has no tendency to Christianity, or in gaining, or in—you know not what?

4

You have generally a flow of spirits and a liveliness of temper, which, by the grace of God, make you willing to undertake, and capable of performing, many good works, at which others would be discouraged. You are able to take up and carry the crosses which may be expected to lie in the way.

5

Have you ever considered that God governs the world, that his providence is over all, and over you in particular? Does anything befall you without his knowledge or without his designing for your good.

He knows all you suffer; he sees all your wants. Is he not disposing all these things for your profit?

6

It cannot be that people should grow unless they give themselves to reading. A reading people will always be a knowing people.

Why are we not more knowing?

Because we are idle. We forget the very first rule—"be diligent;" never be unemployed a moment, never be triflingly employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

I fear there is altogether a fault in this matter, and that few of us are clear.

7

How we give in to that hateful custom of painting things beyond the life! Let us make a conscience of magnifying or exaggerating anything.

Let us rather speak under than above the truth.

8

The corruption of the best things is always the worst of corruptions.

9

Nothing can be more kind than the mentioning what you think is amiss in my conduct. The more freedom you use in doing this, the more I am indebted to you.

Have you a person who speaks to you so plain and downright as I do? who considers not the *peer*, but the *man*? not the *earl*, but the immortal *spirit*? who rarely commends, but often blames? who is jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest you should be less a Christian by being a nobleman? O, my lord, is not such a person needful for you in the highest degree?

IO

Shall we say : “The former days were better than these?” God forbid that we should be so unwise and so unthankful! Nay, rather let us praise him all the day long, for he hath dealt bountifully with us. No “former time,” since the apostles left the earth, has been better than the present. None has been comparable to it, in several respects.

We are not born out of due time, but in the day of his power, a day of glorious salvation. May we be always ready to follow, crying in our hearts : “Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly !”

II

Be not so *positive*, especially with regard to things which are neither easy nor necessary to be determined. I ground this advice on my own experience. When I was young, I was *sure* of everything. In a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as before. At present I am hardly sure of anything, but what God has revealed to man.

12

God himself has told us how to speak, both as to the matter and manner. "If any man speak," in the name of God, "let him speak as the oracles of God."

I think a preacher or writer of sermons has lost his way when he imitates any of the French orators. Only let his language be plain, proper, and clear; and it is enough.

13

It is undoubtedly true that some silly people have frequently talked both of my brother and me. Yet this is no more than we were to expect, especially from busybodies in other men's matters.

And it is no more possible to restrain their tongues than it is to bind up the wind.

But it is sufficient for us that our own conscience condemns us not, and that our record is with the Most High.

14

It is now the day of small things, but the grain of mustard seed may grow into a great tree.

These little labors of love pave your way to things of greater importance.

15

We leave every man to enjoy his own opinion and to use his own mode of worship, desiring only that the love of God and his neighbor be the ruling principle in his heart, and show itself in his life by a uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth.

16

God has favored *you* with many advantages. You have health, strength, and a thousand outward blessings. And why should you not have all inward blessings, which God has purchased for those that love him?

You are good-humored, mild, and harmless; but unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God.

I do not remember to have felt lowness of spirits for one quarter of an hour since I was born.

Rising early is equally good for soul and body. It helps the nerves better than a thousand medicines ; and, in particular, preserves the sight and prevents lowness of spirits more than can be well imagined.

Sleep early, and rise early.

Unless you are ill, never lie in bed much above seven hours. Then you will never lie awake ; your flesh will be firm and your spirits lively.

Pray do not measure all men by yourself. Do not imagine *you* are the universal standard.

If *you* deceived yourself, you should not infer that all others do.

Forget yourself.

20

Use no tobacco unless prescribed by a physician. It is an uncleanly and unwholesome self-indulgence, and the more customary it is the more resolutely should you break off from every degree of that vile custom.

Touch no dram. It is liquid fire. It is a sure though slow poison. It saps the very springs of life.

21

I never was afraid of any but the *almost* Christians.

You may easily slide into no religion at all or into a dead form that will never make you happy either in this world or in that which is to come.

If you keep a single eye and have courage and steadiness, you may be an instrument of much good, but you will tread on slippery ground.

22

Do not make *too* much haste. Give everything the last touch.

“Hurry?” I have no time to be in a hurry.

23

A people who talk much know little.

Do we not naturally catch their spirit with whom we converse?

One had need to be an angel, not a man, to converse three or four hours at once to any purpose. In the latter part of such conversations we shall doubtless lose all the profit we had gained before.

24

Have done with this childish prattle about the proportion of creatures to their Creator. If we add to the littleness of man, the inexpressible shortness of his duration, it is a wonder that the great, eternal, infinite Governor of the universe should regard so diminutive a creature.

Suffice it then for us to know this plain and comfortable truth, that the Almighty Creator hath shown that regard to this poor creature of a day which he hath not shown even to the inhabitants of heaven. He hath given us his Son, his only Son, both to live and to die for us. Let us live unto him, that we may die unto him and live unto him forever.

25

Can anything on earth be greater charity than to bring up orphans?

How can you, on principles of reason, spend your money in a way which God may *possibly forgive*, instead of spending it in a manner which he will *certainly reward*.

Every pound you give to the poor is put into the bank of heaven, and it will bring a glorious interest; yea, and such as will be accumulating to all eternity.

26

He has a good understanding and is not unacquainted with learning, though not deeply versed therein. He is no disagreeable person, has a pleasing address, and is lively as well as sensible. Now when you add to this that he is quite new and very young you may judge how he will be admired and caressed.

How will raw, inexperienced youth be able to encounter this? If there be not the greatest of miracles to preserve him, will it not turn his brain?

27

Wherever the work of our Lord is to be carried on, that is my place for to-day.

And we live only for to-day ; it is not our part to take thought for to-morrow.

It signifies but little where we are so we are but fully employed for our good Master.

28

“Child,” said my father to me when I was young, “you think to carry everything by dint of argument ; but you will find, by and by, how very little is ever done in this world by clear reason.” Very little indeed ! Passion and prejudice govern the world, only under the name of reason. It is our part, by religion and reason, to counteract all we can.

It is yours in particular to do all that in you lies to soften the prejudices of those that are around about you, and to calm the passions from which they spring.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.”

29

Leave not your old, well-tried friends! The new is not comparable with them.

I am really concerned for you. An evil man has gained the ascendancy over you.

30

At my brother's request, I sat again for my picture. This melancholy employment always reminds me of that natural reflection,

"Behold, what frailty we in man may see!
His shadow is less given to change than he."

May 1

Guile, subtlety, cunning—the whole art of deceiving, by whatever term it is expressed—is not accounted an accomplishment by wise men, but is indeed an abomination to them. And even those who practice it most are not pleased with it in other men, neither are they fond of conversing with those who practice it on themselves.

The greatest deceivers are greatly displeased at those that play their own arts back at them. Terence represents even an old heathen, when it was imputed to him, as answering with indignation : “Dissimulation is no part of my character.”

2

If you desire to have your conscience always quick to discern and faithful to accuse or excuse you, if you would preserve it always sensible and tender, be sure to obey it at all events. Continually listen to its admonitions, and steadily follow them.

3

Why are thousands of people starving, perishing, for want? Such is the case at this day in a land flowing, as it were, with milk and honey; abounding, as it were, with all the necessities, the conveniences, the superfluities of life.

Why is bread corn so dear? Because such immense quantities of it are continually consumed by distilling. Have we not reason to believe that half the wheat produced is every year consumed, not by so harmless a way as throwing it into the sea, but by converting it into deadly poison, poison that naturally destroys not only the strength and life but also the morals of our country?

4

Should we not discern the providential time? Should we stay till the impression is worn away?

Just now we have an opportunity of breaking the ice, of making a little trial.

Methinks 'tis a pity we should lose any time, for what a vapor is life!

5

Those who plead the cause of the God of love are to imitate him they serve ; and, however provoked, to use no other weapons than those of truth and love, of scripture and reason.

Be calm. Do not venture into the field again until you are master of your temper.

Be good-natured. Passion is not commendable, but ill nature still less.

Be courteous. Show good manners as well as good nature to your opponent, of whatever kind.

Be merciful. When you have gained an advantage over your opponent, do not press it to the uttermost.

6

Common sense brings us back to the grand truth : “ There is no power but of God.”

“ But,” you say, “ I am not equal to this task. I have neither gifts nor grace for such employment.” You say true, it is certain you have not. And who has? But do you not know Him who is able to give them? Perhaps not at once, but rather day by day; as each is so shall your strength be.

7

The *other world*, as we usually term it, is not far from every one of us. It is above and beneath and on every side. Only the natural man discerneth it not: partly because he has no spiritual senses, whereby alone we can discern the things of God; partly because so thick a veil is interposed as he knows not how to penetrate.

But when he is born of God, born of the spirit, how is the manner of his existence changed! His whole soul is now sensible of God, and he can say, by sure experience: "Thou art about my bed, and about my path. I feel thee in all my ways. Thou besettest me behind and before, and layest thy hand upon me."

8

They are a people the greatest part of whom hear much, know everything, and feel nothing.

The soul and body make a man. The spirit and discipline make a Christian.

9

I am persuaded that both evil and good angels had a large share in this transaction; how large we do not know now, but we shall know hereafter.

“Let those give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the enemy.”

10

But sometimes this excellent quality, tenderness of conscience, is carried to an extreme. We find some who fear where no fear is, who are continually condemning themselves without cause, imagining some things to be sinful which the Scripture nowhere condemns, and supposing other things their duty which the Scripture nowhere enjoins. This is properly termed a “scrupulous conscience,” and is a sore evil. It is highly expedient to yield to it as little as possible; rather it is a matter of earnest prayer that you may be delivered from this sore evil, and may recover a sound mind, to which nothing would contribute more than the converse of a pious and judicious friend.

II

You do not understand my manner of life. Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit.

When I was at Oxford, and lived almost like a hermit, I saw not how any busy man could be saved. I scarce thought it possible for a man to retain the Christian spirit amidst the noise and bustle of the busy world.

God taught me better by my own experience. I have ten times more business than ever I had in my life, but it is no hindrance to silence of spirit.

I2

Take away from us all anger and wrath and bitterness, all clamor and evil speaking. Let thy spirit so rest upon us that from this hour we may be kind to each other, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us !

13

Even religious masters may still be mistaken with regard to the manner of instilling religion into children. They may not have the spirit of government, to which even some good men are utter strangers. They may habitually lean to this or that extreme, of remissness or of severity. And if they either give children too much of their own will or needlessly and churlishly restrain them, if they either use no punishment at all or more than is necessary, the leaning either to one extreme or the other may frustrate all their endeavors.

In the latter case, it will not be strange if religion stink in the nostrils of those that were so educated. They will naturally look on it as an austere, melancholy thing ; and if they think it necessary to salvation, they will esteem it a necessary evil, and so put it off as long as possible.

14

I heartily receive the advice of the angel in Milton :

"How *well* is thine; how *long* permit to heaven."

15

I know many who love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him.

But these souls dwell in a shattered, corruptible body, and are so pressed down thereby that they cannot *exert* their love as they would by always thinking, speaking, and acting *precisely right*.

For want of better bodily organs, they sometimes inevitably think, speak, or act wrong.

Yet I think they need the advocacy of Christ, even for these involuntary defects; although they do not imply a defect of *love*, but of *understanding*.

16

As many of them increase in worldly goods, the great danger I apprehend now is their relaxing into the spirit of the world, and then their religion is but a dream.

Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can.

17

Human learning is by no means to be rejected from religion ; but if it is considered as a key, or the key, to the mysteries of our redemption, instead of opening to us the kingdom of God, it locks us up in our own darkness.

God is an all-speaking, all-working, all-illuminating essence, possessing the depths of every creature according to its nature ; and when we turn from all impediments, this divine essence becomes as certainly the true light of our minds here as it will hereafter.

18

A good pronunciation is nothing but a natural, easy, and graceful variation of the voice, suitable to the nature and importance of the sentence we deliver.

The first business of a speaker is so to speak that he may be heard and understood with ease.

Persons with weak voices are recommended to strengthen them by reading or speaking something aloud for at least half an hour every morning.

19

It is seldom God suffers the storm to rise so high as torture or death or bonds or imprisonment. Whereas his children are frequently called to endure the lighter kinds of persecution. They frequently suffer the estrangement of kinsfolk, the loss of the friends that were as their own souls. They find the truth of the Lord's words: "Suppose ye that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather a division." But all these circumstances likewise are under the wise direction of God, who allots to every one what is most expedient for him.

20

It is not decent to begin talking aloud as soon as service is ended, and hurrying to and fro, as in a beer garden.

It is a bad custom to gather into knots just after the sermon, and turn a place of worship into a coffee house.

I therefore desire that none would talk under the roof, but go quietly and silently away.

21

You startle me when you talk of grieving so much for the death of an infant. This is certainly a proof of inordinate affection, and if you love them thus all your children will die.

You have large proofs that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. He knoweth the way whence you go; when you have been tried you shall come forth as gold.

22

I was much concerned when I heard you were likely to marry a woman against the consent of your parents.

I have never, in an observation of fifty years, known such a marriage attended with a blessing. I know not how it should be, since it is flatly contrary to the fifth commandment.

I told my mother, pressing me to marry: "I dare not allow you a positive voice herein. I dare not marry a person because you bid me, but I must allow you a negative voice. I will marry no person if you forbid. I know it would be a sin against God."

Take care what you do.

23

The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the souls of believers, whereby the spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are the children of God.

The spirit of God, witnessing with our spirit, does secure us from all delusion. We are liable to trials wherein the testimony of our own spirit is not sufficient, wherein nothing less than the direct testimony of God's spirit can assure us that we are his children.

24

I dare no more *fret* than curse or swear.

The rain came plentifully through the thatch into my lodging room ; but I found no present inconvenience, and was not careful for the morrow.

About food and raiment we take no thought ; our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things, and he will provide ; only let us be faithful and diligent.

25

I advise you, first to be a Bible Christian yourself inwardly and outwardly ; then train up your children in the selfsame way. Say to them with mildness and with firmness : “ Be ye followers of me even as I am of Christ.”

Whoever is pleased or displeased, keep to this.

I will kill or cure the fault of those unwise and unkind parents who make their children finer than themselves.

26

Be steadily serious, as you are generally encompassed with those who, with a little encouragement, would laugh or trifle from morning till night.

Avoid all familiarity with women. This is deadly poison both to *them* and to *you*. You cannot be too wary in this respect. Therefore begin from this hour.

I know what is in man, therefore I make large allowances for human weakness.

However, keep thyself pure.

27

God trieth us every moment, weighs all our thoughts, words, and actions, and is pleased or displeased with us according to our works. I see more and more clearly that there is a great gulf fixed between us and all those who, by denying this, sap the very foundation, both of inward and outward holiness.

28

Always take advice or reproof as a favor ; it is the surest mark of love.

O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper. By nature you are very far from it ; you are stubborn and headstrong. You cannot take advice from any one. Your letter was written in a very wrong spirit.

29

In this chapel be sure to make accommodation for the poor. They are God's building *materials* in the erecting of his church. The rich make good scaffolding but bad *materials*.

Money lovers are the pest of every Christian society. They have been the main cause of destroying every revival of religion.

30

You have need to be all alive yourself if you would impart life to others. And this cannot be without much self-denial.

Who of you is a pattern of self-denial even in little things? Who is never idle?

Is your whole heart in the work? Do not you give way to unconcern, indolence, and fear of men?

If so, you are unfit for the work which requires much life. Otherwise your labor will be tiresome to yourself and of little use to others.

31

There is no folly too great even for a man of sense, if he resolves to follow his own imagination.

Freethinkers, so called, are seldom close thinkers.

They will not be at the pains of reading such a book as this. One that would profit them must dilute his sense, or they will never swallow nor digest it.

June 1

Meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to offer the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement; I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for *inward* holiness.

I hope to have cause of blessing God forever for the acquaintance begun this day.

2

We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last; storms must come hither too; and let them come, when we are ready to meet them.

Don't be afraid of a wreck, for Jesus is in the ship. After the most violent storm the Lord will, perhaps all at once, bring our ship into the desired haven.

3

You are entangled among several who can plead for themselves little more than that they do no hurt. Would to God even that plea would hold! Is it no hurt to rob you of your time, for which there is no equivalent but eternity?

Every time a gay wretch wants to trifle away a part of that invaluable treasure which God has lent him, shall he force away also a part of hers? Surely there is a way of escape! The God whom you serve point it out to you!

4

The question is not whether I could do more good to others there or here; but whether I could do more good to myself, seeing wherever I can be most holy myself there I can most promote holiness.

That course of life tends most to the glory of God wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others.

5

Let your very disputing show that you have “put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, gentleness, long-suffering,” that even according to this time it may be said, “see how these Christians love one another.” I dare not speak of “the deep things of God” in the spirit of a prize fighter or a stage player.

6

Scarcely is the form of godliness seen among us. Take any one you meet, take a second, fourth, or twentieth. Not one of them has even the appearance of a saint, any more than of an angel. Is there no needless visiting on the Sabbath day? no trifling, no impertinence of conversation? And on other days are not the best of our conversing hours spent in foolish talking and jesting—nay, perhaps in wanton talking too? Are there not many of us found to eat and drink with the drunken? Are not even the hours assigned for study too commonly employed in reading plays, novels, and idle tales? ✓

What is faith, the faith which is properly saving?

It is such a divine connection of God and the things of God as, even in its infant state, enables every one that possesses it to fear God and work righteousness. And whosoever believes thus far is acceptable of him. He actually is, at that very moment, in a state of acceptance, but he is at present only a *servant* of God, not properly a *son*.

Let us bear with one another, remembering that it is the prerogative of the great God to pierce through all his own infinite schemes with an unerring eye, to surround them with an all-comprehensive view, to grasp them all in one single survey, and to spread a reconciling light over all their immense varieties.

Man must yet grapple with difficulties in this dusky twilight; but God, in his time, will irradiate the earth more plentifully with his light and truth.

9

Hitherto you are only a *servant*, you are not a *child* of God. You have already great reason to praise God that he has called you to his honorable service. Fear not, continue crying unto him, and you shall see greater things than these! And indeed, unless the servants of God halt by the way, they will receive the adoption of sons.

10

I have been charged with being too strict, with carrying things too far in religion, and laying burdens upon myself, if not on others, which are neither necessary nor possible to be borne.

Give me the censure of the many, the praise of the few.

11

Be mild, tender, patient.

Be plain and open in dealing with souls.

Once more let me beg you to consider whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behavior, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ?

12

They who teach children to love praise train them for the devil.

Fathers and mothers who give children everything they like are the worst enemies they have.

Your children are immortal spirits whom God hath for a time intrusted to your care, that you may train them up in all holiness. One soul is more valuable than all the world beside. Every child therefore you are to watch over with utmost care, that you may give your account of each to the Father of spirits with joy and not with grief.

13

Deal faithfully with your own souls. Do you do nothing which you know is contrary to the will, either of your father or mother? Are you careful to do whatever a parent bids?

Have you ever considered the extent of that obedience to your parents which God requires? "Children, obey your parents in *all* things;" no exception, but of things unlawful.

14

Let me ask you, in tender love and in the spirit of meekness, Is this a Christian city? Are we considered as a community of men, so filled with the Holy Ghost as to enjoy in our hearts and show forth in our lives the genuine fruits of that Spirit? Are all magistrates, all heads and governments of colleges (not to speak of the inhabitants of the town), of one heart and soul?

Is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts? Are the tempers the same that were in Christ? Are our lives agreeable thereto?

If we provoke him to lay us waste, and turn us upside down, and overthrow us as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, shall we not have procured this unto ourselves?

Did he set no example of so terrible a judgment before our eyes? Had we never heard of the destruction of Jamaica or that of Luna? If we perish at last, we perish without excuse, for what could have been more to save us?

15

Food and raiment I have, such food as I choose to eat and such raiment as I choose to put on ; I have a place where to lay my head ; I have what is needful for life and godliness ; and I apprehend that this is all the world can afford. The kings of the earth can give me no more.

For as to gold and silver I desire it not ; I trample it under my feet. I only fear lest any of it should cleave to me, and I should not be able to shake it off before my spirit returns to God.

I will take care, God being my helper, that none of the accursed stuff shall be found in my tents when the Lord calleth me hence.

16

How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or not ? I hope not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm, and you have much more.

17

O brethren, let us not still fall out by the way! If we cannot as yet think alike in all things, at least we may love alike. Herein we cannot possibly do amiss.

That accursed itch of disputing had well-nigh destroyed all the seed which had been sown. And this vain jangling they called “contending for the faith.”

I doubt the whole faith of these poor wretches is but an opinion.

18

What man of threescore was ever *convinced* of anything. Is not an old man’s motto, “*Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris?*” When we are passed middle age, does not a kind of stiffness and inflexibility steal upon the mind as well as the body?

And how does this bar the gate against all convictions!

Let who will speak, if what is spoken be true, I am ready to subscribe it.

19

We are accustomed to speak of dissipation as having respect chiefly, if not wholly, to the outward behavior, to the manner of life. But it is within before it appears without; it is in the heart before it is seen in the outward conversation. There must be a dissipated spirit before there is a dissipated manner of life.

Abhor dissipation as you would abhor the devil, whose offspring and likeness it is. Abhor it as you would abhor the extinction of all virtue and the universal prevalence of an earthly, sensual, devilish spirit, and flee from it as you would from the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

20

Let you and me build up the city of God. To this I press forward continually.

Let us draw the saw no longer, but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ.

21

Let us live this day as if it were our last.

22

How many are they in every city who profane the Sabbath with a high hand! How many that openly defy God; that break the laws, both divine and human, by working at their trade, delivering their goods, receiving their pay, or following their ordinary business, in one branch or another, and “wiping their mouth” and saying: I do no evil! How many buy and sell on the day of the Lord, even in the open streets of this city! How many open or (with some modesty) half open their shops, even when they have not the pretense of perishable goods, without any pretense at all? Money is their god, and gain their godliness.

A whole army joins together, and with one consent in the face of the sun runs upon the thick bosses of God’s buckler.

23

God never used us to any purpose till we were a proverb of reproach. Nor have we now one jot more of dishonor, of evil report, than we know is necessary, both for us and for the people, to balance that honor and good report which otherwise could not be borne.

You need not, therefore, be so much afraid of or so careful to avoid this. It is a precious balm ; it will not break your head, neither lessen your usefulness.

24

Wear no superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing which is of a glaring color or which is gay, glistering, showy, nothing apt to attract the eyes of bystanders.

I do not advise women to wear rings or ear-rings.

It is true these are little, very little things ; therefore they are not worth defending ; therefore give them up, let them drop, throw them away, without another word.

25

I have thought: I am a creature of a day. I am a spirit come from God and returning to God. I want to know one thing: the way to heaven. God himself has condescended to teach me the way. He hath written it down in a book. O, give me that book! At any price give me the book of God. I have it, and here is knowledge enough for me.

Here I am far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone; only God is here. In his presence I read his book. And if there is a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read, I lift up my heart to the Father of lights, and ask him to let me know his will. And what I thus learn, that I teach.

26

If you fall upon people that meddle not with you, without either fear or wit, you may possibly find that they have a little more to say for themselves than you are aware of.

I "follow peace with all men;" but if a man set upon me without either rhyme or reason, I think it my duty to defend myself, so far as truth and justice permit.

27

Watch and pray continually against pride. Beware of enthusiasm. Beware of desiring anything but God.

We are always in danger of enthusiasm.

Always remember *much grace* does not imply *much light*. Give not place to the dangerous mistake that none can teach *you* but those that are themselves saved from sin.

28

I saw no cause to speak against *you* because you did against *me*. I wanted you to do more, not less good; and therefore durst not do nor say anything to hinder it. Indeed, I trust that “the bad blood is now taken away.” Let it return no more. Not content with not weakening each other’s hands or speaking against each other, directly or indirectly, let us defend each other’s character to the uttermost against either ill or well-meaning evil speakers.

29

Meekness seems properly to relate to ourselves, but it may be referred either to God or our neighbor.

When this due composure of mind has reference to God it is termed “resignation.”

When we consider it with regard to ourselves we style it “patience.”

When it is exerted toward other men it is “mildness” to the good and “gentleness” to the evil.

They who are truly meek do not desire to extinguish any of the passions which God has, for wise ends, implanted in their nature; but they have the mastery of all; they hold them all in subjection, and employ them only in subservience to those ends.

30

No one whom I ever knew has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep.

Nor can I ever believe it was ever the will of our Lord that any congregation should have one teacher only.

This preacher has one talent; that, another. Be their talents ever so great, they will, ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them.

July 1

He that does not love God will surely love some of the works of his hands; will love the creature if not the Creator. To how many species of idolatry is every man exposed! Adam sinned with his eyes open. He rebelled against his Creator, as is highly probable,

Not by stronger reason moved,
But fondly overcome with female charms.

He sinned in his heart by inward idolatry, by loving the creature more than the Creator.

2

Although I have not an absolute power over my own mind, because of the corruption of my own nature; yet, through the grace of God assisting me, I have a power to choose and do good as well as evil. I am free to choose whom I will serve; and, if I choose the better part, to continue therein even unto death.

The end of this life—the life of every man born into the world—is to know, love, and serve his great Creator.

3

Who can bear general applause without being puffed up, without being insensibly induced to think of himself “more highly than he ought to think.”

Praise is generally poison to the soul, and the more pleasing the more fatal, particularly when it is undeserved; so that well might our poet say:

Parent of evil, bane of honest deeds,
Pernicious flattery! thy destructive seeds,
In an ill hour, and by fatal hand
Sadly diffused o'er virtue's gleby land,
With rising pride amid the corn appears,
And checks the hope and promise of the year.

4

I have learned, by the grace of God, in every state to be content. What a peace do we find in all circumstances when we can say: “Not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father,” may all Christians say.

How wonderfully do both faith and love connect God with man!

5

We should constantly use the most common, little, easy words (so they are pure and proper) which our language affords.

There is a dignity in this simplicity which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank.

What is it that constitutes a good style? Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness joined together. When any one of these is wanting, it is not good style.

Conciseness brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If I find any stiff expression, I throw it out.

Clearness, in particular, is necessary.

6

How many years were we beating the air in this place! one wrong-headed man pulling down all we could build up, but since he has gone, the word of God takes root.

“Let the morrow take thought for the things of itself ;” to-day do what you can for the love of God, of your brethren, and of the cause of God.

7

I want you to be all love. This is the perfection I believe and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high-strained perfection is not.

Let you and I go on to perfection! God grant we may so run as to attain!

8

God has used many means to curb your stubborn will and break the impetuosity of your temper. He has chastened you with strong pain, and still he may say: "How long liftest thou up thyself against me?" Are you more humble, more gentle, more patient, more pliable than you were?

I fear quite the reverse. I fear your natural tempers are rather increased than diminished.

O beware, lest God give you up to your own heart's lusts, and let you follow your own imagination!

9

Has not this aptness to find fault frequently shown itself in abundance of instances? Do not you explicitly condemn all your fellow laborers, blaming one in one instance, one in another, so as to be thoroughly pleased with the conduct of none?

Does not this argue a very high degree of censoriousness? Does it not imply the thinking very highly of yourself? Does it not imply something of self-sufficiency?

May the God whom you serve give you to form a right judgment!

10

Sanctification does not include a power never to think a useless thought, nor ever speak a useless word. I myself believe that such a perfection is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body, for this makes it impossible “always to think right.”

While we breathe, we shall more or less mistake. If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

11

A shower of rain will not frighten experienced soldiers.

You have only to go on calmly and steadily, and God will arise and maintain his own cause.

12

I cannot be content with your being ever so harmless or regular in your behavior, or even exemplary in all externals. You have received the fear of God already, but shall you stop there? God forbid it! This is only the beginning of wisdom. You are not to end there. Fear shall ripen into love. You shall know that love of God which passeth knowledge.

Almost all your neighbors would set you down for a *good* believer.

O beware of these flatteries! Hold fast to the conviction which God has given you. His desire is that you should receive all his precious promises.

13

My lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay so long as I think so.

Duty is all I consider. Trouble and reproach I value not.

I am by no means clear that I can, with a good conscience, throw away what I think the providence of God has put into my hands.

14

Remove hindrances out of the way. Judge not one another, despise not one another, envy not one another.

Be not displeased with one another's gifts or success, even though greater than your own.

Wait not for one another's halting, much less wish for it or rejoice therein.

Love as brethren. Think well of and honor one another. Wish all good, all grace, all gifts, all success—yea, greater than your own—to each other. Readily believe good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil.

15

If you are not in pressing want, give something, and you will be no poorer for it. Grudge not, fear not; lend unto the Lord, and he will surely repay.

If you earn but three shillings a week, give a penny out of it, and you will never want. But I do not say this to you who have ten or fifteen shillings a week, and give only a penny. I have been ashamed for you, if you have not been ashamed for yourself. Give in proportion to your substance. Open your eyes, your heart, your hand.

16

I will thank the youngest man among you to tell me of any fault you see in me. In doing so I shall consider him my best friend.

“Henry Moore, you are a witness that what John Atlay said is untrue. He said: ‘Mr. Wesley could never bear a man who contradicted him.’ Now no man in England has contradicted me as much as you have done, and yet, Henry, I love you still. You are right.”

The measure of prosecuting learning is its usefulness to good life; and, consequently, all prosecution of it beyond or beside this end is impertinent and immoderate.

I intend to study nothing at all but what serves to the advancement of piety and good life.

I have spent thirteen years in the most celebrated university in the world in pursuing both such learning as the academical standard requires and as my own private genius inclined me to; but I intend to spend the remainder of time in studying only what makes for the moral improvement of my mind, and the regulation of my life.

Gaining knowledge is a good thing, but saving souls is a better.

By this very thing you will gain the most excellent knowledge of God and eternity.

You will have abundant time for gaining other knowledge too.

18

Lo, I come, if this soul and body may be useful to anything, to do thy will, O God. If it please thee to use the power thou hast over dust and ashes, here they are to suffer thy good pleasure. If thou pleasest to visit, either with pain or dishonor, I will humble myself under it, and through thy grace be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Hereafter no man can take away anything from me, no life, no honor, no estate; since I am ready to lay them down as soon as I perceive thou requirest them at my hands. Nevertheless, O Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; but if not, thy will be done.

19

All parties are already too much sharpened against one another. We must pour water, not oil, upon the flame.

Violent methods of redress are not to be used till all other methods fail.

Of all scourges from God, war is the most to be deprecated; because it often sweeps away all traces of religion, and even of humanity.

20

I earnestly entreat you take good heed how you teach these deep things of God. Beware of that common but accursed way of making children parrots instead of Christians.

Regard not *how much*, but to how good purpose they read. Turn each sentence every way, propose it in every light, and question them continually on every point. Select the plainest and most useful portions of Scripture, such as children may the most easily understand, and such as it most concerns them to know.

21

I can make allowance for faintness and weakness and pain. I remember when it was my own case. I am glad you have a skillful physician, but you must not be surprised or discouraged if you do not recover your strength so soon as one might wish.

What is chiefly to be desired is that God may sanctify all his dispensations to you, and that all may be the means of your being more entirely devoted to him whose favor is better than strength or health or life itself.

22

Presumption is one grand snare of the devil, in which many of the children of men are taken. They so presume upon the mercy of God as utterly to forget his justice. Although he has expressly declared, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," yet they flatter themselves that in the end God will be better than his word. They imagine they may live and die in their sins, and nevertheless "escape the damnation of hell."

23

Suppose you could give the same relief to the sick by another, you could not reap the same advantage to yourself, you could not gain that increase in lowliness, in patience, in tenderness of spirit, in sympathy with the afflicted which you might have gained if you had assisted them in person. Neither would you receive the same recompense in the resurrection of the just, when "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor."

These things you must do in your own person. You see they cannot be done by proxy.

24

God himself, the Holy One “that inhabiteth eternity,” is inspecting your heart, your tongue, your hand every moment; and he himself will surely bring you into judgment for all you think and speak and act under the sun.

If you believe that God is about your bed and about your path and spieth out all your ways, then take care not to do the least thing, not to speak the least word, not to indulge the least thought which you have reason to think would offend him.

25

How are men of an elevated turn of mind tempted to seek happiness, as their various tastes lead, in poetry, history, music, philosophy, or curious arts and sciences!

Now although it is certain all these have their use, and therefore may be innocently pursued, yet the seeking happiness in any of them, instead of God, is manifest idolatry.

O let your heart be whole with God!

Seek your happiness in him, and him alone. Beware that you cleave not to the dust! See that you use the world as not abusing it.

26

Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God, and go through with it.

You have now a providential call.

Be fervent in prayer, that God would arise and maintain his own cause.

Assuredly he will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear.

27

None of our senses can reach beyond the bounds of this visible world. They supply us with such knowledge of the material world as answers all the purposes of life. But as this was the design for which they were given, beyond this they cannot go. They furnish us with no information at all concerning the invisible world.

But the wise and gracious Governor of worlds, both visible and invisible, has prepared a remedy for this defect; to take us up where sense sets us down, and help us over the great gulf.

28

I earnestly advise you to abide in your place; keep your own station.

Contain yourselves within your own bounds.

Do not cast away the peculiar glory which God hath put upon you and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up.

29

Methodist parents who would send your girls headlong to hell send them to a fashionable boarding school.

In these seminaries, too, the children teach one another pride, vanity, affectation, intrigue, artifice, and, in short, everything which a Christian woman ought not to learn. Their whole conversation turns upon things which one would wish she would never think of.

I never knew a pious, sensible woman, that had been bred at a large boarding school, who did not aver one might as well send a young maid to be bred in Drury Lane.

30

You make the strife of which you complain.

Make not a pretense for being weary of well-doing. From this hour let this idle strife be buried in eternal oblivion. Talk not of it any more.

Let us prepare to meet our God !

31

Why do so many fall into nervous disorders? Because they do not avoid indolence and intemperance.

They do indeed use exercise, but many of them do not use enough. They are not intemperate in the vulgar sense—they are neither drunkards nor gluttons—but they take more food than nature requires, particularly in the evening.

I advise :

1. Touch no dram, tea, or tobacco.
2. Eat very light, if any, supper.
3. Lie down before ten. Rise before six.
4. Every day use as much exercise as you can bear ; or—murder yourselves by inches.

August 1

There is one expression that occurs twice or thrice in your letter, which gives me some concern: you speak of finding freedom to do this or that.

This is a word much liable to be abused. If I have plain Scripture or plain reason for doing a thing—well! I regard not whether I have freedom or no. This is an unscriptural expression, and a very fallacious rule.

2

I have two silver teaspoons at London, and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread.

O why do not all the rich that fear God constantly visit the poor? Can they spend part of their spare time better? Certainly not; so they will find in that day when “every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.”

3

To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it ; hardly one in three does this.

It is a common thing for those who are sanctified to believe they cannot fall. Nevertheless we have seen some of the strongest of them after a time move from their steadfastness.

Sometimes suddenly, but oftener by slow degrees, they have yielded to temptation ; and pride or anger or foolish desires have sprung up in their hearts. Nay, sometimes they have utterly lost the life of God, and sin hath regained dominion over them.

4

I cannot admire French oratory. I despise it from my heart.

I could even now write as floridly and rhetorically as even the admired Dr. B., but I dare not, because I see the honor that cometh from God only.

Therefore I dare no more write in fine style than wear a fine coat.

5

Satan now chooses to assault us by subtlety more than by strength.

6

My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of the city, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness of the poor men to whom our lives are intrusted. Can any that either fear God or love their neighbor hear this with unconcern? Especially if they consider the interest of our country, as well as of these unhappy men themselves. For can it be expected that God should be on their side who are daily affronting him to his face?

Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless there are some who ought to do so. But many of these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay and do just nothing.

I would to God it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service.

7

We should tremble at the very thought of entering into a marriage covenant, the closest of all other, with any person who does not love or at least fear God. This is the most horrid folly, the most deplorable madness, that a child of God could possibly plunge into; as it implies every sort of connection with the ungodly, which a Christian is bound in conscience to avoid.

No wonder, then, it is so flatly forbidden of God; that the prohibition is so absolute and peremptory. “Be not unequally yoked with an unbeliever.”

8

There are many truths it is not worth while to know. If we had a dozen centuries of life allowed us, we might perhaps be pardoned for spending a little time upon such curious trifles; but with the small pittance of life we have, it would be ill husbandry to spend a considerable part of it in what makes neither a quick nor a sure return.

9

Honor or preferment I do not want any more than a feather in my cap.

You must needs follow your own conscience, who ever is pleased or displeased. Then, whether your success be less or more, you will, by and by, give up your account with joy.

10

Religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches.

We ought not to forbid people to be diligent and frugal. We must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, to save all they can—that is, in effect, to grow rich. What way then, I ask, can we take that our money may not sink us to the nethermost hell?

There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who gain all they can and save all they can, will likewise give all they can, then the more they gain the more they will grow in grace.

11

Witness the profusion of ribbons, gauze, or linen about your heads !

Do you ask : “ But may we not as well buy fashionable things as unfashionable things ? ” I answer: Not if they give you a bold, immodest look, as those huge hats, bonnets, headdresses do. And not if they cost more. “ But I can afford it.” O lay aside that nonsensical word ! No Christian can afford to waste any part of the substance which God has intrusted him with.

12

I met between nine hundred and one thousand children belonging to our Sunday school. I never saw such a sight before. All are serious and well-behaved. Many had as beautiful faces as I believe all England or Europe can afford. When they all sang together, and none of them out of tune, the melody was beyond that of any theater ; and what is best of all, many of them truly fear God, and some of them rejoice in his salvation.

13

Ten persons of a quiet temper are better than thirty contentious ones.

You cannot be too watchful against evil speaking.

Beware of anger.

14

You seem to apprehend that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness and with a social, friendly temper. So far from it that I am convinced, as true religion cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness cannot be without true religion. I am equally convinced that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness.

Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavor to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life. So do I. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hindrance to some greater good or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule.

15

We are to go forward, whoever goes back or turns aside.

But this implies," you may say, "a thousand crosses, such as I feel I am not able to bear." You are not able to bear them *now*, and they are not *now* come. Whenever they do come, will he not send them in due number, might, and measure? And will they not all be for your profit, that you may be a partaker of his holiness?

17

Outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before; however, I still read the scriptures and said my prayers.

What I now hoped to be saved by was not being so bad as other people, having still a kindness for religion, reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers.

True religion is seated in the heart, and God's law extends to all our thoughts, as well as words and actions.

16

To judge whether any action be lawful on the Sabbath or no, we are to consider whether it advances the end for which the Sabbath was ordained. Now the end for which the Sabbath was ordained is the attainment of holiness. Whatever, therefore, tends to advance this end is lawful on this day. Whatever does not tend to advance this end is not lawful on this day.

18

It is certain that the Author of our nature designed that we should not destroy but regulate our desire for knowledge.

How many voluntary blockheads there are among us, whose ignorance is not owing to incapacity but to mere laziness.

How few of the vast number who have it in their power are truly learned men!

O, what is so scarce as learning, save religion!

But remember, before all, in all, and above all, your great point is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

19

What a plentiful harvest we have of wickedness almost peculiar to ourselves! How dreadful then is the condition wherein we stand! On the very brink of utter destruction. But why are we thus? I am afraid the answer is too plain to every considerate man.

Because of our sins; because we have well-nigh filled up the measure of our iniquities. For what wickedness is there under heaven which is not found among us at this day?

20

One soul is worth all the merchandise in the world.

Unless thou givest a full tenth of thy substance, of thy fixed and occasional income, thou dost undoubtedly set thy heart upon thy gold, and it will eat thy flesh as fire.

Surely “it is easier for the camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven”

21

I do not advise you to go on too fast.

It is not expedient to break up more ground than you can keep.

A swift increase is generally followed by a decrease equally swift.

Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation.

22

Health you shall have, if health be best; if not, sickness will be a greater blessing.

You will never be much stronger till you add change of air to exercise.

Every day of your life take at least an hour's exercise between breakfast and dinner.

If you drink any, drink but little tea; and none at all without eating, or without sugar and cream.

Above all, beware of worldly sorrow. Beware of foolish and hurtful desires. Beware of inordinate affections.

23

I have often repented of judging too severely, but very seldom of being too merciful.

Beware of jealousy, or judging one another.

24

What is the barrier between men and brutes? Man is capable of God; the inferior creatures are not.

Are you a man? God made you a man, but you make yourself a beast. Wherein does a man differ from a beast? Is it not chiefly in reason and understanding?

But you throw away what reasoning you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast; not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor, common, filthy swine. O, how honorable is a beast of God's making, compared to one who makes himself a beast!

But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you, and gain others which perhaps were not in you. You cause the fire of anger or malice or lust to burn seven times hotter than before.

25

Pass smoothly over the perverseness of those you have to do with, and go straight forward. It is abundantly sufficient that you have the testimony of a good conscience toward God.

As you are not a stripling, I wonder you have not yet learned the difference between promise and performance.

We must never imagine that all who promise will perform.

26

When it pleased God to give me a settled resolution to be not a nominal but a *real* Christian (being then about twenty-two years of age), my acquaintances were as ignorant of God as myself. But I knew my ignorance; they did not know theirs. I faintly endeavored to help them, but in vain. Meantime I found, by sad experience, that even their *harmless* conversation, so called, damped all my good resolutions.

I resolved to have no acquaintance by chance, but by choice; and to choose such only as would help me on my way to heaven.

27

But what is patience? A gracious temper wrought in the heart of a believer by the power of the Holy Ghost.

It is a disposition to suffer whatever pleases God, in the manner and for the time that pleases him.

28

It is an infallible truth that “all worldly joys are less than that one joy of doing kindnesses.”

A man of pleasure was asked some years ago: “Captain, what was the greatest pleasure you ever had?” After a little pause he replied: “When we were upon our march in Ireland, on a very hot day, I called at a cabin on the road, and desired a little water. The woman brought me a cup of milk. I gave her a piece of silver, and the joy that poor creature expressed gave me the greatest pleasure I ever had in my life.”

Now if the doing good gave so much pleasure to one who acted merely from natural generosity, how much more must it give to one who does it on a nobler principle: the joint love of God and his neighbor!

29

It is a great truth: “He that fears no God can love no friend.”

Trust not any man until he fears God.

30

Why is it that so few know themselves?

Because the heart is not only “desperately wicked, but deceitful above all things.” So deceitful that we may well ask: “Who can know it?” Who indeed, save God that made it?

It is so deceitful that the generality of men are continually deceiving both themselves and others. How strangely do they deceive themselves, not knowing either their own tempers or characters.

Is it any wonder that they deceive others also?

But is there no exception to the wickedness of man’s heart?

Yes, in those that are born of God “old things are passed away, and all things” in him “are become new.”

31

Why is there pain in the world, seeing God is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works?

Because there is sin. Had there been no sin, there would have been no pain. But pain is the necessary defect of sin.

But “where sin abounded, grace does much more abound.” For not as the condemnation so is the free gift, but we may gain infinitely more than we have lost.

If Adam had not sinned, the Son of God had not died. We might have loved God the Creator, God the Preserver, God the Governor, but there would have been no place for love to God the Redeemer.

September 1

One grand objection of infidels against Christianity is the *lives* of Christians. Of Christians, do you say? I doubt whether you ever knew a Christian in your life.

“Why if these only are Christians,” said an eminent wit, “I never saw a Christian yet.” I believe it; you never did, and perhaps you never will, for you will never find them in the grand or gay world. The few Christians that are upon the earth are to be found only where *you* never look for them.

Though some are called Christians, the name does not imply the thing; they are as far from this as hell from heaven.

2

You have great reason to praise God for the great things that he hath done, and to expect still greater things than these.

What is it, which is good for us, that our Lord will not give us if we can but trust him?

3

For what reason is the friendship of the world so absolutely forbidden?

According to the oracles of God, friendship with the world is no less than spiritual adultery. All who are guilty of it are addressed by the Holy Ghost in these terms: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses."

It is a sin in itself. It is attended with most dreadful consequences. It is plainly violating our marriage contract with God—by loving the creature more than the Creator—in flat contradiction to that kind command: "My son, give me thine heart."

4

I am not fond of opinions as such. I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby to the best of my understanding.

I search for truth, plain Bible truth, without any regard to the praise or dispraise of men.

But I am always willing to receive more light.

5

I must not plead an exemption for myself, but example must go before precept.

But “this is not unwholesome to me; why, then, should I leave it off?”

To give an example to those to whom it is undeniably prejudicial, and to have the more wherewith to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked.

6

The impotence of the human mind, even the Roman philosopher could discover. “There is in man,” says he, “this weakness (he might have said the sore disease): *gloriæ sitis*, thirst for glory. Nature points out the disease, but nature shows us no remedy.”

Nor is it strange, that though they sought for a remedy, yet they found none. For they sought it where it never was and never will be found—namely, in themselves, in reason, in philosophy, broken reeds, bubbles, smoke!

They did not seek it in God, in whom alone it is possible to find it.

7

Diversions are of various kinds. Some are almost peculiar to men, as the sports of the field, hunting, shooting, fishing. Others are indifferently used by persons of both sexes, as races, masquerades, plays, assemblies, balls, cards, dancing, and music; to which may be added the reading of plays, novels, romances, newspapers, and fashionable poetry.

But supposing all these to be quite *innocent diversions*, yet are there not more excellent ways of diverting themselves for those who love or fear God?

8

I design plain truth for plain people. I abstain from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless sometimes citing the original Scripture.

I spent an agreeable hour at a concert of my nephew, but I was a little out of my element among lords and ladies. I love plain music and plain company best.

9

James B—— is an amiable young man, at present full of faith and love. If possible, guard him from those that will be inclined to love him too well.

Admit no desire of praise or esteem.

10

Many years ago, when I was at Oxford, on a cold winter's day, a young maid called upon me. I said: "You seem to be half starved. Have you nothing to cover you but that thin linen gown?" She said: "Sir, this is all I have." I put my hand in my pocket; but found I had scarce any money left, having just paid away what I had. It immediately struck me: "Will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful steward?' Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold? O, justice! O, mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?"

Everything about thee which cost more than Christian duty required thee to lay out is the blood of the poor.

II

I was growing faint in my mind. The being continually watched over for evil; the having every word I spoke, every action I did—small and great—watched with no friendly eye; the hearing a thousand little, tart, unkind reflections in return for the kindest words I could devise,

Like drops of eating water on the marble,
At length have worn my sinking spirits down.

Yet I would not say, “Take thy plague away from me;” but only, “Let me be purified, not consumed.”

12

Love casts out, or at least overrules, fear.

It is true, they are poor enough; but if it be God’s work, he will provide the means.

We were deeply conscious of our own insufficiency; and though in one sense we trusted in God alone, yet we sought help from all his children, and were glad to be taught by any man.

13

When I cannot convince, I can bear with them; and, indeed, rejoice at the grace of God which is in them.

I impose my notions upon none.

I will be bold to say there is no man living further from it.

I make no opinion the term of union with any man.

I think and let think. What I want is holiness of heart and life. They who have this are my brother, sister, and mother.

14

A calm, even spirit goes through work far better than a furious one.

Patience does not imply the *not feeling*. It is not apathy or insensibility. It is at the utmost distance from stoical stupidity—yea, at an equal distance from fretfulness or dejection.

The *patient believer* is preserved from falling into either extreme.

15

They pray little, and with little fervency ; and therefore their prayer has little power with God. It does not at once shut and open heaven.

When you have once learned the use of prayer, you will find that this will fill every space of your life, be interfused with all your employments ; and wherever you are, whatever you do, embrace you on every side.

16

If you have a family, seriously consider before God how much each member of it wants in order to have what is needful for life and godliness.

This being done, fix your purpose to gain no more. As it comes daily or yearly, so let it go.

“ But I must provide for my children.” Certainly. But how? By making them rich? Then you will probably make them heathens.

Leave them enough to live on, not in idleness and luxury, but by honest industry.

17

Do not imagine an outward form, a round of duties both in public and private, is religion ! Do not suppose that honesty, justice, and whatever is called morality—though excellent in its place—is religion !

And least of all dream that orthodoxy, right opinion (vulgarily called *faith*), is religion. Of all religious dreams, this is the vainest.

O do not take anything less than this for the religion of Jesus Christ: the “ faith which worketh by love ” all inward and outward holiness.

Come boldly to the throne of grace, “ trusting in his mercy,” and you shall find “ he saveth to the uttermost.”

18

The design of the Holy Spirit was to assist our faith, not to gratify our curiosity.

“ The life which I now live I live by *faith* in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

We then see not by a chain of *reasoning*, but by a kind of *intuition*—by a direct view.

19

Dost thou imagine, because thou dost not see God, that God doth not see thee?

Laugh on, play on, sing on, dance on; but for all these things God will bring thee to judgment."

There is no charity under heaven to be compared to this: the bringing light to the poor heathens that are called Christians but, nevertheless, still sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

20

It seems God himself has already decided the question concerning dancing. If it be not evil in itself, yet it leads young women to numberless evils.

Balls or assemblies are more reputable than masquerades, but must be allowed by all impartial persons to have exactly the same tendency.

The devices whereby the subtle god of this world labors to destroy the children of God are numberless as the stars of heaven or the sands upon the seashore.

21

You will have need of all the courage and prudence God has given you. Indeed, you will want constant supplies of both.

Very gently and very steadily you should proceed between the rocks on either hand.

Be thankful to Him that gave thee such a talent, so much power of doing good. Yet bear not to rejoice, but with fear and trembling.

While you act exactly right expect to be blamed by both sides.

22

Do you seem to be a great way off? You are not out of God's reach. Jesus heals *all* diseases as well as one. He does not expect you to bring him fruit in order to fetch the root. All you want he will give you with a new heart. He is all-sufficient. Why should you be without his blessing any longer?

Now believe, and his blood shall so flow over your soul that no spot shall be found there. He will keep your heart as with a garrison, that it shall never open to anything but his love.

23

It is impossible that an idle man can be a good man, sloth being inconsistent with religion.

Leisure and I have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged me.

Redeem the time. Improve the present moment.

It is possible to be so careful about what may be by and by as to neglect what is *now* required at our hands.

24

For the use of every sensible reader I can but here subjoin part of his (Mr. Laws) words :

“ Self-denial of all kinds is the very life and soul of piety. If I was to desire you not to study the gratification of your palate, I would not insist upon the sin of wasting money, though it is a great one; but I would desire you to renounce such a way of life, because it supports you in such a state of sensuality as renders you incapable of relishing the most essential doctrines of religion.”

25

It is surprising that from one end of the land to the other so little good is done in a *regular way*.

What have you to do but to follow that way which the providence of God points out?

Surely there are works of mercy as well as works of piety which are real means of grace. I would include all such as are in a state of affliction, whether of mind or body, and that whether they are good or bad, whether they fear God or not.

26

My dear Molly, let the time past suffice. As yet, the breach may be repaired. You have wronged me much, but not beyond forgiveness.

At length know me; know yourself. Your enemy I cannot be, but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more. Be content to be a private, insignificant person, loved by God and me. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show you that I do indeed love you even as Christ the Church.

27

Is not sin the greatest evil on this side of hell? And if so, does it not naturally follow that an entire deliverance from it is one of the greatest blessings on this side of heaven.

In God's name, why are you so fond of sin?
What good has it ever done you?

28

Would it not have been far more kind, suppose I had spoken wrong, to tell me of it in a *private* manner? How much more unkind was it to accuse me to all the world of a fault which I never committed!

Is it wise thus to put a sword into the hand of our common enemy? Are we not both fighting the battle of our Lord against the world? And shall I furnish them with weapons against *you*, or *you* against *me*?

O beware! This contempt is anti-Christian, diabolical. The God of love deliver you and me from this spirit.

29

There can be no medium between a single eye and an evil eye.

So far as you aim at anything beneath God your whole soul and the whole course of your life will be full of darkness.

30

I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America; but I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline which they first set out.

Methodism is only plain scriptural religion, guarded by a few prudential regulations. The essence of it is holiness of heart and life; the circumstantial all point to this.

If even the circumstantial parts are despised, the essential will soon be lost. And if ever the essential parts should evaporate, what remains will be dross.

October 1

A thing directly contrary to the whole tenor of true religion is the spirit of persecution.

Let it not be said: “This does not concern us Protestants; we think and let think. We abhor the spirit of persecution.”

Blessed be God! the laws of our country do not allow this; but is there no such thing as domestic persecution? The saying or doing anything unkind to another for following his own conscience is a species of persecution. Now are we all clear of this?

Is there no husband who, in this sense, persecutes his wife? Do not parents persecute their children? nor masters or mistresses, their servant?

If they do this, and think they do God service therein, they must not cast the first stone at the Roman Catholics.

2

Avoid the first appearance of pride or magnifying yourself.

Beware that you do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. If you think too highly of yourself, you can scarce avoid despising your brother.

I thank you for your reproof. There is reason in what you say. If there was not evil, there was the appearance of evil.

3

Lay this down as an infallible principle : that an *entire, absolute*, renunciation of all worldly interests is the only possible foundation of that virtue which your station (as a clergyman) requires.

Without this, all attempts after an *exemplary* piety are vain. Detest, with utmost abhorrence, all desires of making your fortunes either by preferments or rich marriages ; and let it be your only ambition to stand at the top of every virtue as visible guides and patterns to all that aspire after the perfection of holiness.

4

He that hath faith and confidence in God will, of consequence, be a man of courage.

A believer can say :

I fear no denial; no danger I fear;
Nor start from the trial, for Jesus is near.

This courage only faith can supply.

5

If the instruments by which the soul works are disordered, the soul itself must be hindered in its operations. Let a musician be ever so skillful, he will make but poor music if his instrument be out of tune. From a disordered brain there will necessarily arise confusedness of apprehension, showing itself in a thousand instances.

By sad experience we find that this “corruptible body presses down the soul.”

The more exercise he uses, winter and summer, the more health he will have. I can face a north wind at seventy-seven better than I could at seven and twenty.

But if you *moan over him*, you will kill him outright.

6

As for reputation, though it is a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that—a clean heart, single eye, a soul full of God.

Ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them.

I *hear* what angry men say or write, but I do not often regard it.

7

It seems a great deal may be said in defense of seeing a serious tragedy. I could not do it with a clear conscience, at least in an English theater, the sink of all profaneness and debauchery.

Why should you any more plunge yourself into a snare, into the trap Satan has laid for you?

Have they not so hurt you as to stab your religion to the heart?

Have they not cooled (if not quenched) your love to God? This is easily determined. Have you the same delight in God which you once had? I fear not.

A sermon full of truth, but no more likely to awaken souls than an Italian opera.

In religion I am for as few innovations as possible ; I love the old wine best.

Mistake, as well as ignorance, is in our present state inseparable from humanity. Every child of man is in a thousand mistakes, and is liable to fresh mistakes every moment. A mistake in judgment may occasion a mistake in practice.

I mistake, and possibly cannot avoid mistaking, the character of this or that man. I suppose him to be better or worse than he really is. Upon this wrong supposition I behave wrong to him —that is, more or less affectionately than he deserves.

Here is a remedy for all the corruption of our natures, for God hath given his Holy Spirit to renew us “in knowledge,” opening the eyes of our understanding.

IO

The *world* is my parish !

The persons intended by our “neighbor” are every child of man, every one that breathes the vital air, all that have souls to be saved; and if we refrain from performing this office of love to any because they are sinners above other men, they may persist in their iniquity, but their blood will God require at our hands.

II

But we cannot be always intent upon business. Both our bodies and minds require some relaxation. We need intervals of diversion from business. But allowing that “friendship of the world is enmity against God,” yet who has resolution to walk in the most excellent way?

However importuned or tempted, have no friendship with the world.

With me no melancholy void,
No moment lingers unemployed
Or unimproved below;
My weariness of life is gone,
Who live to serve my God alone,
And only Jesus know.

12

I am very rarely led by impressions, but generally by reason and by scripture.

I *see* abundantly more than I *feel*.

13

To begin with the beginning of the day : It is the manner of the generality of Christians, if they are not obliged to work for their living, to rise, particularly in winter, at eight or nine in the morning, after having lain in bed eight or nine, if not more, hours. Sure I am there is a “more excellent way” to promote health, both of body and mind.

It is undoubtedly the most excellent way, in defiance of fashion and custom, to take just so much sleep as experience proves our nature to require. This is preferable to any medicine which I have known, both for preventing and removing nervous disorders.

Why should you not walk in this way? Because it is difficult? The difficulty of it will soon be over ; but the advantage of it will remain forever.

14

It has been discovered that there is an atmosphere surrounding every human body which naturally affects every one that comes within its limits. Is there not something analogous to this with regard to a human spirit?

Familiar intercourse with unholy men directly tends to corrupt the heart.

Do not play with the fire, but escape before the flames kindle upon you.

15

How innumerable are the benefits which God conveys to the children of men through the channel of suffering! So that it might well be said, "What are termed afflictions in the language of men are in the language of God styled blessings."

What room could there be for trust in God, if there was no such thing as pain or danger? It is by sufferings that our faith is tried.

It is well-pleasing to God that we should own him in the face of danger; in defiance of sorrow, sickness, pain, or death.

Seeking happiness in learning, of whatever kind, falls under “the desire of the eyes.” If you can do but one, either follow your studies or instruct the ignorant, let your studies alone.

I would throw by all the libraries in the world rather than be guilty of the perdition of one soul.

I cannot, with any patience, reflect that out of so short a time as human life, consisting it may be of fifty or sixty years, nineteen or twenty shall be spent in hammering out a little Latin or Greek, and in learning poetical fiction and fantastic stories. If one were to judge of the life of man by the proportion of it spent at school, one would think the antediluvian mark were not yet set.

How many excellent and useful things might be learned while boys are thumbing and murdering Hesiod and Homer?

17

Several valuable lessons we may learn from a deep consciousness of our own ignorance.

First, a lesson of humility—not “to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.”

Secondly, a lesson of faith—of confidence in God—may teach us a full trust in his wisdom.

Thirdly, a lesson of resignation—we may be instructed to say at all times: “Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

18

You are placed in the eye of all the world, friends and enemies. You have no experience, no knowledge of people; are but a novice, as it were, in the ways of God! It requires all the omnipotent love of God to preserve you in your present station; but if you continue teachable and advisable, I know nothing that shall be able to hurt you.

Now use all the knowledge and love and life and power you have already attained. Be jealous to receive more light daily, more of the knowledge and love of God, more of the spirit of Christ.

19

The original word “dissipate” properly signifies to *disperse* or *scatter*. So by an easy metaphor our thoughts are said to be dissipated when they are irregularly scattered up and down. In like manner our desires are dissipated when they are unhinged from God, their proper center, and scattered to and fro among the poor, perishing, unsatisfying things of this world.

Hence a dissipated man is a man that is separated from God—that is, disunited from his center. The vulgar, it is true, commonly confine this character to those who are violently attached to women, gaming, drinking ; to dancing, balls, etc. But it equally belongs to the serious fool who forgets God by close attention to any worldly employment, suppose it were of the most elegant or important kind.

Whoever is habitually inattentive to the presence and will of his Creator, he is a dissipated man.

20

Rational genuine *courage* cannot subsist without patience. The brutal courage, or rather fierceness of a lion, may probably spring from impatience; but true fortitude, the courage of a man, springs from just the contrary temper. The same spirit inciting us to be “patient in bearing ill and doing well.”

Patience

Lays the rough path of a peevish nature even,
And opens in each heart a little heaven.

21

The hungry soul, like a busy bee, wanders from flower to flower; but it goes off from each with an abortive hope and a deluded expectation. Every creature cries: “Happiness is not in *me*.” They may now and then have agreeable dreams from

Wealth, honor, pleasure, or what else
This short-enduring world can give.

The more pains any of the children of men take to extract happiness from any earthly object, the greater will be their disappointment.

22

If we neglect to reprove, when a fair opportunity offers, we are undoubtedly to be ranked among those that “hate their brother in their heart.” Every one who has a soul to be saved is entitled to this good office from thee.

Let us first of all take care that whatever we do may be done in “the spirit of *love*.” Then, by the grace of God, love will beget love. The affection of the speaker will spread to the heart of the hearer. You will find, in due time, that your labor hath not been in vain in the Lord.

23

It is not a little sin to represent *trifles* as necessary to salvation. We know, indeed, that wrong opinions in religion naturally lead to wrong tempers or wrong practices, and that consequently it is our bounden duty to pray that we may have a right judgment in all things.

Still a man may judge as accurately as the devil, and yet be as wicked as he.

Holiness is having the mind that was in Christ and walking as Christ.

24

It is the observation of an ancient writer that there has been from the beginning two orders of Christians. The one lived an innocent life, conforming in all things not sinful to the customs and fashions of the world. They endeavored, in general, to have a conscience void of offense in their behavior, but did not aim at any particular strictness. The other Christians not only abstained from all appearance of evil, but used all diligence to attain the whole mind that was in Christ; and labored to walk, in every point, as their beloved Master.

I am inclined to think that whosoever finds redemption in the blood of Jesus has then the choice of walking in the higher or the lower path.

Will it be a little thing to have a lower place than you might have had in the kingdom of your Father?

25

Family religion is shamefully wanting, and almost in every branch.

You may as well expect a child to grow without food as a soul without prayer.

Birds in their little nest agree,
And 'tis a shameful sight
When children of one family
Fall out and chide and fight.

“‘You must be reconciled,’ said Wesley. ‘Go and shake hands with each other.’ They did so. ‘Now put your arms around each other’s neck, and kiss each other. Now,’ said he, ‘come to me;’ and taking two pieces of bread and butter, he folded them together and desired each to take a part. ‘Now,’ he added, ‘you have broken bread together.’ He then put his hands upon their heads and blessed them.”

26

Where the great work goes on well, we should take care to be exact in little things.

We have need to use all the *common sense* God has given us as well as all the grace.

27

The wearing of gay or costly apparel naturally tends to breed and increase vanity. By vanity, I here mean the love and desire of being admired or praised. Every one of you that is fond of dress have a witness of this in your own bosom. Whether you will confess it before man or no, you are convinced of this before God.

It is with a view to be admired that you thus adorn yourselves, and you would not be at the pains were none to see you but God and his holy angels. The more you indulge this foolish desire the more it grows upon you. You have vanity enough by nature.

O stop! Aim at pleasing God alone, and all these ornaments will drop off.

28

The world says: “The Methodists are no better than other people.” This is not true. Yet it is nearer true than we are willing to imagine. Personal religion is amazingly superficial amongst us. How little faith, how little communion with God! How much love of the world; desire of pleasure, of ease, of praise, of getting money!

What avails *preaching alone*, though we could preach like angels.

29

That the term “perfection” is a scriptural term in undeniable. Therefore none ought to object to the use of the *term*, whatever they may do to this or that *application* of it.

I never meant any *more* by perfection than the loving God with all our heart, and serving him with all our strength. But I dare not say *less* than this.

I still think that perfection is only another term for holiness, or the image of God in man. God *made man perfect*, I think is just the same as he made him *holy* or in his own image.

30

It is the *duty* of every private Christian to obey his spiritual pastor, by either doing or leaving undone anything of an indifferent nature, anything that is in no way determined in the Word of God.

Be assured of one thing : the more conscientiously you obey your spiritual guides the more powerfully will God apply the Word which they speak in his name to your heart. “Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for they watch over your souls as they that shall give account, that they may do this with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.”

31

Vote without fee or reward for the person you judge most worthy.

Speak no evil of the person you vote against.

Take care that your spirits are not sharpened against those that vote on the other side.

The subject we are treating of is not a light one. I plead for the safety of my country—yea, for the children that are yet unborn.

November 1

The Lord's Supper was chiefly ordained for a sacrament.

First, to *represent* the sufferings of Christ which were *past*, whereof it is a *memorial*.

Secondly, to *convey* the first fruits of these sufferings in *present graces*, whereof it is a *means*.

Thirdly, to *assure* us of a *glory to come*, whereof it is an infallible *pledge*.

To *men*, the holy communion is a *sacred table* where God's minister is ordered to represent, from God his Master, the passion of his dear Son as still fresh and still powerful for their eternal salvation.

And to *God*, it is an *altar* whereon men mystically present to him the same sacrifice as still bleeding and suing for mercy.

2

The whole city is in confusion. O what a pity there could not be some way of managing elections of every sort without this embittering of men against men, and kindling fires which cannot be quenched in many years!

For God's sake, for the honor of the gospel, for your country's sake, and for the sake of your own souls beware of bribery. On no account take money or money's worth. Give, not sell, your vote. Touch not the accursed thing, lest it bring a blast upon you and your household.

Keep yourself pure.

3

It is hard to say whether self-will or pride be the more fatal distemper.

It was chiefly pride that threw down so many of the stars of heaven and turned angels into devils.

Self-will, as well as pride, is a species of idolatry, and both are directly contrary to the law of God.

4

In what state is thy soul? Was God, while I am yet speaking, to require it of thee, art thou ready to meet death and judgment? Hast thou secured the one thing needful? Art thou clothed in Christ? Canst thou stand in his sight who is of “purer eyes than to behold iniquity?”

What would I do now if I was sure I had but two days to live?

5

Beware of the sins of omission.

Lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Lose no shred of time.

A person may be cleansed from all *sinful tempers*, and yet need the atoning blood. For what?

For negligences and ignorances, for both words and actions as well as omissions, which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law. And I believe no one clear of these until he lays down his corruptible body.

6

Above thirty years ago a motion was made in Parliament for raising and embodying the militia and for exercising them, to save time, on Sunday. When the motion was like to pass, an old gentleman stood up and said: "Mr. Speaker, I have one objection to this; I believe an old book called the Bible." The members looked at one another, and the motion was dropped.

Wherever a pretty show is to be seen the people will flock together, and will lounge away so much time before and after it that the churches will be far emptier than they are at present.

7

I reverence the young because they may be useful after I am dead.

God begins his work in children. Thus the flame spreads to those of riper years, till at length all know him, from the least unto the greatest.

8

Every broad way is infallibly a false one.

You have too long shut your eyes against the light. Open them now, before it is too late! Let not any temporal consideration weigh with you, for eternity is at stake.

9

In what manner do you transact your worldly business? I trust, with diligence, whatever your hand findeth to do, doing it with all your might; in justice, rendering to all their due; in every circumstance of life—yea, in mercy—doing unto every man what you would he should do unto you.

This is well; but a Christian is called to go still farther: to add piety to justice, to intermix prayer—especially prayer of the heart—with all labor of his hands. Without this, all diligence and justice only show him to be an honest heathen.

Many there are who profess the Christian religion that go no farther than honest heathenism.

10

Never think of being religious unless you are honest.

What has a thief to do with religion?

What want of moral honesty is there amongst you! What laborers do as they would be done by? Which of them does as much work as he can?

Who does as he would be done by in buying and selling?

The Methodist knave is the worst of all knaves.

11

How little brotherly love is there! What continual judging one another! What gossiping, evil-speaking, tale-bearing!

“If thy brother shall sin against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone.” Confirm your love toward him, and you will thereby “Heap coals of fire upon his head.”

Love can
Soften and melt and pierce and break
An adamantine heart.

12

What is a catholic spirit?

There is scarce any expression which has been more grossly misunderstood and more dangerously misapplied.

It is not an indifference to all opinions. A man of a truly catholic spirit is as fixed as the sun in his judgment concerning the main branches of Christian doctrine.

It is not indifference to public worship. It is not indifference to all congregations. He is fixed in his congregation as well as in his principles.

But while he is steadily fixed in his religious principles, while he firmly adheres to that worship of God which he judges to be most acceptable in his sight, and while he is united by the tenderest and closest tie to one particular congregation, his heart is enlarged toward all mankind—those he knows, and those he does not. He embraces with strong and cordial affection neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies.

This is catholic, or universal, love. Catholic love is catholic spirit.

13

After the heart is cleansed from pride, anger, and desire it may suffer them to reenter. I cannot perceive any state mentioned in Scripture from which we may not, in a measure at least, fall. So that strong cautions are needful.

14

The more good we do, the happier we shall be. The more we deal our bread to the hungry and cover the naked with garments, the more we relieve the stranger and visit them that are sick or in prison, the more comfort we receive even in the present world, the greater the recompense we have in our own bosom.

Adam's fall gave all his posterity a thousand opportunities of suffering, and thereby of exercising all those passive graces which increase both their holiness and happiness. It gives them opportunities of doing good in numberless instances, of exercising themselves in various good works, which otherwise could have had no being.

15

God cut short his work. He does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour.

How precious, above all utterance, above all conception, is every portion of the short, uncertain day of life! How deeply does it concern every child of man to let none of these run to waste, but to improve them all to the noblest purposes!

The least of these a serious care demands;
For, though they're little, they are golden sands!

16

Let innocence be joined with prudence. Not that offspring of hell which the world calls prudence, but with that "wisdom from above" which our Lord peculiarly recommended to all who would promote his kingdom upon earth. "Be ye therefore wise as serpents," while ye are "harmless as doves."

You will need all the sense you have, and to have all your wits about you.

17

If you will go hand in hand with me, do.
But do not hinder me if you will not help me.
Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might
have done better.

If I had no other good to give, I ought at
least to have given them good words.

18

The church where they assemble is not gay
or splendid, which might be a hindrance, but
plain as well as clean. The persons who as-
semble there are not a gay, giddy crowd, who
come chiefly to see and be seen, nor a company
of goodly, formal, austere Christians, whose re-
ligion lies in a dull round of duties ; but a peo-
ple most of whom know, and the rest earnestly
seek, to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Accordingly, they do not spend their time in
courtesying or in staring about them ; but in
looking upward, and in looking inward, in
hearkening to the voice of God, and pouring
out their hearts before him.

19

“Is a man that is at age, or a woman that is married, under any further obligation to obey their parents?”

Although it is true that a man is to leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife; yet I cannot learn, either from Scripture or reason, that marriage either cancels or lessens the general obligation of filial duty. Much less does it appear that it is either canceled or lessened by you having lived one and twenty years.

When I was between forty and fifty, I judged myself full as much obliged to obey my mother in everything lawful as I did when I was in my leading strings.

20

I now look back on a train of incidents that have occurred for many months past, and adore a wise and gracious Providence, ordering all things well.

21

Do you, out of principle, take care to owe no man anything?

A man cannot have any religion who does to others what he would not they should do to him if he were in the same circumstances.

He who had this love in his heart would work no evil to his neighbor. It was impossible for him, knowingly and designedly, to do harm to any man. He was at the greatest distance from cruelty and wrong, from any unjust or unkind action.

22

Ye have need of steadiness.

He that is as a reed shaken with the wind is not fit for this warfare; which demands a firm purpose of soul, a constant, determined resolution.

It is hard for any to persevere unless love overpowers both pain and fear.

With thee conversing, I forget
All time and toil and care;
Labor is rest, and pain is sweet
While thou, my God, art there.

23

Avoid the first appearance of pride or magnifying yourself. You may consider yourself as one in whose hands the Proprietor of heaven and earth and all things therein has lodged a part of his goods to be disposed of according to his direction.

God has committed to our charge that talent —money. It is indeed precious if we are wise and faithful stewards of it, if we employ every part of it for such purposes as our Lord has commanded us to do.

24

As religion is the happiest, so it is the cheer-fullest, thing in the world. But I do not see any possible case wherein trifling conversation can be an instance of it. That I shall be laughed at for this I know. So was my Mas-ter. I am not for a stern, austere manner of conversing. No; let all the cheerfulness of faith be there, all the joyfulness of hope, all the amiable sweetness, the winning easiness of love.

Their “speech is always in grace, seasoned with salt,” with the love and the fear of God.

25

Ye who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth are you filled with all those fruits of the spirit which your important office so indispensably requires? Do you continually remind those under your care that the one rational end of all your studies is to know, love, and serve the only true God? Do you inculcate upon them day by day that without love all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, vexation of spirit? Do you put forth all your strength in the vast work which you have undertaken; using every talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermost of your power?

26

Not only whatever flows from evil is evil, but also whatever leads to it, whatever tends to alienate the soul from God and to make or keep it earthly, sensual, and devilish.

Let us pray, both with the spirit and the understanding, that we may suffer all the infirmities of our nature, all the interruptions of men, all the assaults and suggestions of evil spirits, and in all be “more than conquerors.”

27

Retain a lively sense that God is above all means, and can convey his grace, either in or out of the means which he hath appointed. Be deeply impressed with the fact that there is no *power* nor *merit* in any of the means. The *opus operatum*, the mere worth done, profiteth nothing. Do it because God bids it.

In and through every outward thing seek God alone, looking singly to the *power* of his spirit and the *merits* of his Son.

28

How many sins of omission are they chargeable with! We know the words of the apostle: “To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” How many omissions have they been guilty of in their duty toward God. How many opportunities of communicating, of hearing his word, of public or private prayers have they neglected!

So great reason had even that holy man, Archbishop U——, after all his labors for God to cry out, almost with his dying breath. “Lord, forgive me my sins of omission.”

29

"I grant," says one, "the person I am about to marry is not a religious person. She does not make pretensions to it. But she is a beautiful creature. She is extremely agreeable and, I think, will make me a lovely companion."

But either a man or a woman may ask: "What if the person who seeks my acquaintance be a person of strong understanding, cultivated by various learnings? He is remarkably good-humored, he is a compassionate, humane spirit, and has much generosity in his temper."

On these very accounts, if he does not fear God, he is infinitely more dangerous. If you converse intimately with a person of this character you will surely drink in his spirit.

This is such a temptation as no power of man is able to overcome. Here is no time for conferring with flesh and blood. Whatever you do in this important case must be done at one stroke. You must at once cut off the right hand and cast it from you.

At once conquer or perish !

30

It is the nature of the divine savor which is in you to spread to whatsoever you touch—to diffuse itself on every side—to all those among whom you are.

This is the great reason why the providence of God has so mingled you together with other men, that whatever grace you have received of God may through you be communicated to others.

This is essentially a social religion. I mean not only that it cannot subsist so well but that it cannot subsist at all without society, without living and conversing with other men.

Some intercourse, even with ungodly and unholy men, is absolutely needful in order to the full exertion of every temper which he has described as the way to the kingdom.

December 1

I shall apply myself to read such books as are rather persuasive than instructive ; such as warm, kindle, and enlarge the affections and awaken the divine sense in the soul ; being convinced by every day's experience that I have more need of *heat* than *light*, though I were for more light, still I think the love of God is the best light of the soul of man.

2

It is the nature of love to unite us together ; and the greater the love the stricter the union. While this continues in its strength nothing can divide those whom love has united. To separate ourselves from a body of living Christians with whom we were before united is a grievous breach of the law of love. It is only when our love grows cold that we can think of separating from our brethren.

The pretenses for separation may be innumerable, but want of love is the real cause.

3

Let not shame or fear of men prevent your pulling these brands out of the burning. Many of them are self-condemned.

You have need of patience. Never be “weary of well-doing ; in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.” “Cast thy bread upon the waters ; for thou shall find it after many days.”

Two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases : First, to begin, continue, and end all my advices in the spirit of meekness ; and secondly, to add to meekness long-suffering ; in pursuance of a rule which I fixed long since, never to give up any one till I have tried him at least *ten years.*

4

When you speak let your words be the very picture of your heart, open the window of your breast.

In all company and on all occasions be a man of veracity.

If you would please all men for their good, at all events speak to all men the very truth from your hearts.

5

Beware, thou who art called by the name of Christ, that thou come not short of the mark of thy high calling.

Beware thou rest not, either in a natural state, with too many that are accounted *good Christians*, or in a legal state wherein those who are highly esteemed of men are generally counted to live and die.

6

You are now, as it were, on the crisis of your fate, just launching into life, and ready to fix your choice, whether you will have God or the world for your happiness.

The company of those who know not God, who are strangers to the religion of the heart, especially if they are sensible, agreeable persons, might quite damp the grace of God in your soul.

You cannot avoid being very frequently among men and women that are without God in the world; I trust that you will not be burned, seeing he whom you serve is able to deliver you, even out of the burning fiery furnace.

7

You that are *old* remember,

'Tis time to live, if you grow old;
Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake!

As you have lived many years it may be hoped you have attained such knowledge as may be of use to others. With what strength you have left employ the few moments you have to spare in ministering to those who are weaker than yourselves. Your gray hairs will not fail to give you authority and add weight to what you speak.

8

Never be ashamed to beg for the poor; in this case be an importunate beggar, do not easily take a denial.

Use all the address, all the understanding, all the influence you have, at the same time trusting in him that has the hearts of all men in his hands.

Remember his words: "Inasmuch as ye have done unto the least of these ye have done it unto me."

Think nothing too mean to do for him.

9

Come, let us have a few more strokes at Satan's kingdom, and then we shall depart in peace.

Upon the whole I am really sometimes afraid this evil is from the Lord. We are too wise to acknowledge that God has anything to do in this world. Otherwise should we not seek him by fasting and prayer, before he lets the lifted thunder drop?

When I consider the astonishing luxury of the rich and the shocking impiety of the poor I doubt whether the general dissoluteness of manners does not demand a general visitation.

10

What is the rule whereby men are to judge of right and wrong, whereby their conscience is to be directed?

The Christian rule of right and wrong is the word of God, the writings of the Old and New Testament. This is a lantern unto a Christian's speech and a light in all his paths. This alone he receives as a rule of right or wrong of whatever is really good or evil.

II

You have already received a thousand blessings, but the greatest of all is yet behind, Christ in a sinless heart, reigning the Lord of every motive there.

Christian joy is joy in obedience, joy in loving God and keeping his commandments.

As long as you give yourself to God without reserve you may be assured he will give you his blessing.

12

In fourscore years I have not met with one woman that knew how to manage grandchildren. My own mother, who governed her children so well, could never govern one grandchild. In every other point obey your mother, but with regard to the management of your children steadily keep the reins within your own hand. She would undo all that you have done. She would give them their own will in all things. She would humor them to the destruction of their souls, if not their bodies also.

Complaisance—yea, and temporal interests—must needs be set aside when the eternal interests of your children are at stake.

13

You have a peculiar advantage over many by your station in life. Being superior to them in rank, you have the more influence on that very account. Your inferiors of course look up to you with a kind of reverence. A word from you will be a quickening to them.

O how many talents are we intrusted with! We have need to gird up the loins of our mind and run faster the remainder of our race.

14

Be more consistent with yourselves.

Be mild. Be serious.

Are you sensible of your danger? Are you clear of the curse of loving the world? Do you continue unburned in the midst of fire? Is not eating and drinking or any other pleasure of sense the greatest pleasure you enjoy? Do you not seek happiness in dress, furniture, pictures, or anything else that pleases the eye? Do not you grow soft and delicate?

You are only striving to drink out of empty cups. Let them be painted and gilded ever so finely, they are empty still.

15

"For many a year Methodism at Poplar had a struggle for existence, and often was Wesley importuned to give up the preaching there, but his constant answer was: 'Does the old woman who sits in the corner of the long pew still attend?' 'O yes,' was the reply, 'she never misses.' 'Then for her sake keep going,' was Wesley's rejoinder."

I must and will save as many souls as I can while I live.

16

I felt my heart strangely warm. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

I considered religion as an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master, nor was I afraid of anything more than of bending this rule to the experience of myself or of other men, or of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Examplar.

17

But "there is no temptation," says one, "greater than being without temptation." When, therefore, this is the case, when Satan seems to be withdrawn, then beware lest he hurt you more as a crooked serpent than he could do as a roaring lion.

Take care that you are not lulled into a pleasing slumber, lest he should beguile you as he did Eve, even in innocence, and insensibly draw you from your simplicity toward Christ.

18

It is generally supposed that repentance and faith are only the gate of religion, that they are necessary only at the beginning of our Christian course, when we are setting out in the way to the kingdom. But repentance and faith are full as necessary in order to our *continuance* and *growth* in grace as the former faith and repentance were in order to our *entering* into the kingdom of God.

Till we are sensible of our disease, it admits no cure.

19

Hypocrisy or insincerity is the first thing we are to guard against in prayer. Beware not to speak what thou dost not mean.

Prayer is the lifting up of the heart to God ; all words or prayer without this are mere hypocrisy. Whenever, therefore, thou attemptest to pray see that it be thy one desire to commune with God, to lift up thy heart to him, to pour out thy soul before him.

Use all the privacy thou canst. Pray to God, if it be possible, when none seest but he ; “and thy Father which seest thee in secret, he shall reward thee openly.”

Do not use abundance of words—without any meaning. Say not the same thing over and over again ; think not the fruit of your prayers depends on the length of them.

20

I always reprove profane sailors or, what is worse, profane gentlemen; and many of them will receive it civilly, if not thankfully. They all know, captains as well as common men, that swearing is not necessary. And, even now, we have captains of several men-of-war who do not swear at all, and never were men better obeyed.

How cautious does it behoove you to be lest “any corrupt communication” proceed out of your mouth!

21

It is not only having an eye to the praise of men, which cuts us off from reward in heaven, which leaves us no room to expect the blessings of God upon our works, whether of piety or mercy. Purity of intention is equally destroyed by a view to any temporal reward whatever.

Any temporal view, any motive whatever on this side eternity, any design but that of promoting the glory of God and the happiness of men for God’s sake makes every action, however fair it may appear to men, an abomination unto the Lord.

22

It has been said by a pious man : “ Cleanliness is next to godliness.” Indeed, the want of it is a scandal to all religion, causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of.

It would be a deed of charity to teach the poor whom you visit two things which they are generally little acquainted with, industry and cleanliness.

Without industry we are fit neither for this world nor the world to come.

23

Covetousness, in every kind and degree, is certainly as contrary to the love of our neighbor as to the love of God. And how few, even of the real children of God, are entirely free from it.

Are we *wholly* transformed into the image of him that created us?

Break off the yoke of inbred sin,
And fully set my spirit free!
I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.

24

The end of your praying is not to inform God, as though he knew not your wants already, but rather to inform yourselves, to fix the sense of those wants more deeply in your hearts, and the sense of your continual dependence on him who only is able to supply all your wants.

It is not so much to move God, who is always more ready to give than you to ask, as to move yourselves, that you may be willing and ready to receive the good things he has prepared for you.

25

Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth ! Yea,
Let earth and heaven agree,
Angels and men be joined,
To celebrate with me
The Saviour of mankind ;
To adore the all-atoning Lamb,
And bless the sound of Jesus' name !

Every Christian is happy, and he that is not happy is not a Christian. The great Creator made nothing to be miserable, but every creature to be happy in its kind.

26

Observe your heart at all times, but especially under temptation.

Temptation is a fire that brings up the scum of the unregenerate heart.

27

Is it not surprising that one dosed with the opiates of flattery and sin should imagine, among his other waking dreams, that he walks in great liberty? How easily may he persuade himself that he is at liberty from all *vulgar* errors and from the *prejudice* of education, judging exactly right and keeping clear of all extremes!

“I am free,” he may say, “from all the enthusiasm of weak and narrow souls, from superstition, and from bigotry, continually incident to those who have not a free and generous way of thinking.”

And to be sure it is that he is altogether free from the wisdom which cometh from above.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

God requireth truth in the inward parts. He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins ; and if thou incline unto iniquity with thy heart, the Lord will not hear thee.

God admits no excuse for retaining anything which is an occasion of impurity. Therefore “if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.” Any loss, whether of pleasure or substance or friends, is preferable to the loss of thy soul.

It is the *root* of bitterness which must be struck at, else we labor in vain. “Crucify the flesh.” In vain do we go about to purge the streams if we are at no pains about the muddy fountain.

“The pure in heart” are they whose hearts God hath “purified even as he is pure.”

29

I would recommend very few novels to young persons, for fear they should be desirous of more.

You who have not the assurance of a day to live are not wise if you waste a moment. The shortest way to knowledge seems to be this : (1) To ascertain what knowledge you desire to attain. (2) To read no book which does not in some way tend to the attainment of that knowledge. (3) To read no book which does tend to the attainment of it unless it be the best in its kind. (4) To finish one before you begin another. (5) To read them all in such order that every subsequent book may illustrate and confirm the preceding.

30

From real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all; not from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained. No. "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

31

And now the time of our parting is at hand.
I would leave one word with you before I go.

O let your heart be whole with God! Seek your happiness in him, and him alone. Be a good steward of the manifold gifts of God. Never forget his comprehensive word: "I am the Almighty God! Walk before me and be thou perfect."

Cheerfully expect that he will ever guide you with his eyes, will support you by his guardian hand, will keep you from all evil, and, "when you have suffered awhile, will make you perfect."

He who has overcome the world and its princes shall give his angels charge over her to keep her in all her ways.

The best of all, God is with us.

